HOW THE BOY WAS LOST

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HOW THE BOY WAS LOST.

By

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Title

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I DEDICATE THIS BOOK TO

My Mother

WHOSE STEADFAST DEVOTION TO MY WELFARE
WILL EVER BE A BLESSED MEMORY,

AND TO

The Mother of My Boys

WHOSE LOVE FOR THEM, EXPRESSING ITSELF THROUGH
INTELLIGENT SYMPATHY, UNFAILING TACT AND
TIRELESS SERVICE, HAS BEEN TO THEM
SHELTER, GUIDANCE, STRENGTH,
AND INSPIRATION.

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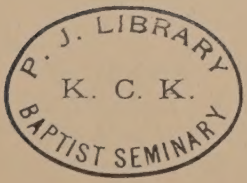
How the Boy Was Lost



CHAPTER I

THE STORY OF ALBERT OGDEN

At the close of the sermon on a beautiful Sunday morning in June Mr. and Mrs. Ogden moved down the broad center aisle of the church, he carrying in his arms a beautiful babe. The minister came down from the pulpit and met them at the altar rail and read the ritual for the baptism of infants. Mr. and Mrs. Ogden listened to the reading, glancing now and then at the child, whose uneasiness threatened to mar the beauty and solemnity of the service. Before the minister had finished the reading it became necessary for Mrs. Ogden to take the babe from its father's arms, and with that skill which nature gives to mothers she managed to keep him quiet until the first part of the ceremony was concluded. Then Mrs. Ogden handed her beautiful baby to the minister, in whose left arm the child lay quietly, with an expression of wonder on his face. Then, with his hand poised above the baptismal bowl, the minister said, "Name this child." "Albert," replied Mr. Ogden, and a moment later the sparkling water fell upon the baby's head, as the minister said with great solemnity: "Albert, I baptize thee in the name

of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen!"

Then occurred an act not prescribed in the ritual; for before he handed the child back to his mother, the venerable pastor lifted the child and affectionately kissed him. An apostle, writing to one of the early Churches, said, "Salute one another with a holy kiss." Aside from those kisses which domestic affection renders sacred, it may well be doubted whether any are more holy than the kiss with which a faithful and loving pastor greets the child whom he recognizes in baptism as a lamb of the Christian fold, a brother in Christ, and a citizen of the Kingdom of heaven.

Then the minister prayed that God would grant to this child "an understanding mind and a sanctified heart," a safe guidance through the "dangers, temptations, and ignorance of his youth," that he "might never run into folly, nor into the evils of an unbridled appetite," that the course of his life might be so ordered "by good education, by holy examples, and by renewing and restraining grace, that, having glorified God in his generation, and served the Church on earth, he might be received into the eternal Kingdom through Jesus Christ our Lord." He also prayed that the child's parents might be divinely helped in the holy task of keeping their household in the way of the Lord.

As soon as Albert was able to lisp the words over after her, his mother taught him to say that simple child's prayer, known wherever the English language is spoken:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep;
If I should die before I wake,
I pray the Lord my soul to take."

When Albert was about six years old his mother took him one day to the primary department of the Sunday school, and because the little fellow was timid in the presence of so many strangers she stayed with him through the hour. The pictures which the teacher used to illustrate the lesson, and the picture card and paper which little Albert carried home so completely captivated him that no further persuasions were needed to make him a regular attendant of the school. He was as lovable a child as any one would wish to know, readily learning and reciting his golden texts, and when his class appeared upon the platform in a public exercise, Albert performed his part with such intelligence and spirit as to make his relatives and friends all proud of him.

When Albert was twelve years old the class to which he belonged became a great trial to the Sunday school teacher and superintendent. It is said

that once in a conference of Sunday school workers a deeply discouraged teacher said, "What on earth is to be done with a boy when he gets to be about twelve years old?" Another replied, "The thing to do with him then is to put him into a barrel, and nail the head in, and leave nothing open for him but the bung hole." A burst of laughter followed this suggestion, and then somebody said, "Yes, but what will you do with him when he gets to be fifteen years old?" "Why, then," exclaimed somebody with a sudden flash of insight, "stop up the bung hole."

When Albert's class had worn out the patience of two or three teachers, and the last one was tearfully protesting at the close of the Sunday school every Sabbath that she could not endure the trial any longer, there came to the Church and community a gracious revival, which seemed, for a time, to solve the problem of Albert's class and many other problems. As a result of many prayers and much personal work all the boys of the Sunday school were swept along by the tide of general enthusiasm to the altar of the church, and those not previously members of the Church joined it upon probation.

This was deemed an opportune time for the reorganization of the Junior League, which the boys also joined. Great was the joy of the Church over

the religious enthusiasm and activity of these boys. The Sunday school superintendent felt that his hardest problem had been solved, and Albert's teacher, instead of sitting down and crying when she got home from Sunday school, reported with great satisfaction the attention and decorum of her boys, their personal work with other boys, and their interest in Bible study. The Junior League also flourished wonderfully, and when Albert and his companions offered prayer so devoutly, and gave their clear and ringing testimonies, it did seem as though the Kingdom of heaven had come with power and the millennium was at hand.

But the thing happened in this Church and community which so often happens after a great revival. After this great stirring up things settled down again, and after this great warming up the people began to cool off. The congregations which had crowded the church for awhile got smaller and smaller, until they were but little, if any, larger than they had been before. The class-meeting which had been revived under the impression that old-fashioned Methodism had been restored, dwindled down to Brother Smith and Grandma Jones and Aunty Jacobs, and when Grandma Jones became unable to get there on account of her rheumatism, it became humiliating to the pastor to keep on announcing a service for which there seemed to be no

real demand, and then the class-meeting came to an end. The Church's midweek prayer service also faithfully registered the general decline of religious interest. For awhile after the revival the prayer-room had been filled, the people prayed with unction and testified with enthusiasm, reported the personal work which they were doing, and the awakening and conversion of their friends. But after awhile there was very little in the way of personal work and new experience to report, and the interest declined and the attendance became less and less, until finally there were but few beside the "old guard" left. Then things moved on in the same old rut, the same old prayers were said, and the same commonplaces of religious experience were repeated.

Now, while the fires of religious enthusiasm were dying all around them, Albert and his boy friends were also cooling off. The general backsliding produced the same effect upon the boys that it produced on the rest of the people; namely, reversion to original state. While some of the older people relapsed into non-attendance at religious services and into Sabbath desecration, and others into scolding and scrapping, and others went back to tobacco and beer and profanity, the boys relapsed into fidgeting and fun-making and unseemly monkey-shines at church, and into the general worldliness and hilarity of boydom. Wrinkles of joy gave place to wrinkles

of care in the face of the Sunday school superintendent, and, metaphorically speaking, the boys' Sunday school teacher "put on sackcloth and ashes." The crisis in the religious life of these boys slowly but surely approached. They continued an irregular attendance at the Sunday school, alternately pitying the distress of the teacher and resenting the strictures of the superintendent, who sought to aid the teacher in controlling them. Things became unendurable also in the Junior League. Gravity gradually gave place to levity in the devotional service. The prayers and testimonies became rigidly stereotyped, parrot-like performances, in which little solemnity and heartiness remained. A boy would pop up and rattle off his conventional testimony, then drop into his seat and look at the other boys with a broad grin on his face, as much as to say, "I am through with my part of this performance. It 's another fellow's turn now." Things came to a crisis one day when Albert, whom another boy had bothered when he was addressing the throne of divine grace, passed the joke along by sticking a pin into a boy who was calling on the name of the Lord. The boy uttered an exclamation of pain and lunged forward, thrusting his head violently against a chair in front of him, thus attracting general attention. Muffled explosions of laughter revealed the spirit or mirth that was general and volcanic on the

masculine side of the room. The levity of the boys and the despair of the Junior superintendent made a short session necessary that day. The superintendent called on Mrs. Ogden that week, and poured out her tale of woe, and Mrs. Ogden passed the story on to Albert with comment sufficiently pertinent when he came home from school. When she brought the subject up again at the supper table, Albert angrily vowed that he would not attend another meeting of the Junior League, and his father, who felt that that institution had already outlived its usefulness, so far as Albert was concerned, approved Albert's determination.

When the time came to receive into full membership the large class of probationers won at the revival meetings, these boys were the subject of an animated discussion in the Official Board. Few of the boys could be charged with any fault or crime which would certainly "exclude a person from the Kingdom of grace and glory." On the other hand, it was difficult to point out any tokens of deep piety on the part of the boys. Some insisted that these boys had never really been converted and that the "Old Adam" ought to be gotten out of them before they were admitted into full membership. Others felt that the boys should be encouraged to join the Church; that in spite of irrepressible and sometimes irreverent mirth most of the boys were

"good goods" morally, and would come along all right and get religion some time, if properly encouraged. It was finally decided that the board should approve for full membership any whom the pastor recommended after canvassing the matter with the boys and their parents. The pastor found the boys pretty thoroughly discouraged about the religious life, and learned through their parents that they were disgruntled and resentful toward various Church officials, and some other people, on account of reproofs and criticisms which they had received. Consequently Albert and most of the boys failed to come into full membership. Albert soon ceased to attend the Sunday school and the morning service of the Church, and became only an occasional attendant upon the evening service. One night he was having a good time with certain chums in a back pew while the pastor was preaching a rather dull sermon. The amusement of the boys over some absurd affair of their own disturbed the languid attention of certain listeners and interfered with the slumbers of certain others, and an official member tapped Albert on the shoulder and invited him and his bunch of boys to behave themselves or stay away from church. The boys accepted the most agreeable alternative, and so "the Church had rest."

The religious factors in Albert Ogden's environment would have achieved better results if it had

not been for other influences working upon him at the same time. He was less than twelve years old when his mother became aware of a somewhat mysterious signal service in operation among the boys. She would hear a certain kind of whistle, and observe that Albert would very soon get through with any book or game engaging his attention at the time, and go out-doors. It was simply a way the boys had of assembling the clan. Albert's mother tried to keep her eye on the boys and know where they were and what they were doing. For the most part their amusements seemed to be innocent enough, but it was soon quite impossible to keep track of them. They would wander away, perhaps down town, or to the river, or into the woods, to some pleasant retreat or secret rendezvous, where they would be unmolested by intruders. On rainy days the woodshed or the hay-mow would serve their purpose.

In these boy-retreats Albert learned to smoke cigarettes. The fascination of it and the frequency of his indulgences grew upon him until his vice could not escape the detection of his mother. When she first accused him of it, he flatly denied it; but the tell-tale odors and contraband articles in his pockets made the case against him conclusive. Paternal expostulations and commands were followed by paternal threshings; but in this case prohibition "failed

to prohibit," and Albert soon graduated from cigarettes to cigars, and now he smokes as openly as any one in town, and as continuously as his pecuniary circumstances will allow.

One day a vile pamphlet, with pictorial illustrations, was brought into the boys' secret place of meeting. One boy read to the others, and they all looked at the pictures. In the half-whispered conversation which followed, each boy contributed what he could to the general information. Some of the boys were very proficient expositors of this new literature, and whetted the taste for more of the same kind, which was from time to time supplied. To this was added a whole under-world of gossip, leaking through and trickling down from the happenings and scandal-mongering of adult society. A consequence of these idle hours and bad society was that Albert became unduly interested in things which should not have claimed his attention yet for many years, and was exposed to powerful temptations, which overcame him; and before his parents suspected the fact he had already gone far in the path of the wayward.

Of course, Albert was getting along badly in his school life. His tobacco habit was having a bad effect upon his nerves, giving to his face a sallow and unnatural expression, destroying his power of attention, and narcotizing his finer sensibilities. His

aggravated and abnormal interest in things which should not have claimed his attention at all, together with his secret vices, made anything like eager interest in his studies and continuous attention to them quite impossible. His parents and teachers tried in vain to arouse him to a sense of his educational opportunities and obligations. He could not get interested in his school work or see the use of it. "What," he said, "is the use of this German and Latin and algebra and the rest of them?" There was very little in his course of study that seemed to him practical. At times he felt humiliated and penitent, and insisted that he wanted to leave school and go to work at something, if anything could be found for him to do that he could do. For awhile Mr. Ogden, who had no use for Albert in his business, resisted all his pleadings for a chance to work, because he wished him to get an education; but when it became perfectly clear that Albert's going to school was leading him to perdition rather than to an education, through the idleness and disgust which his teachers could not overcome, and the secret vices which even his school associations were fostering, Mr. Ogden consented to his leaving school, and helped him to obtain a position. But Albert found it as hard to get interested in his business, and attend to it properly, as he had found it to study in school. He did his

work so unsatisfactorily that he lost his position again and again. He soon lost his courage in the matter of seeking employment, and spent his time idly at home or in loafing about town. Things grew worse and worse, and Albert gave himself with less and less reserve to beer and cards and bad literature and evil practices. His passion for betting and his appetite for strong drink increased. There were occasional rumors to the effect that certain boys belonging to prominent families had been seen in a state of intoxication. When uncomplimentary rumors and incriminating circumstances awakened the suspicions of Albert's father and mother, and they questioned him pointedly, he indignantly denied all accusations. But as he became more addicted to evil he became less cautious, and the case against him was one of cumulative evidence. For a time he found opportunities for dissipation in the annex to the poolroom and the billiard halls. When aroused public sentiment invoked the law successfully against these unlicensed places of resort for liquor, Albert was still able to get intoxicants through his friends. At length he began to visit the saloons himself. After glancing up and down the street to make sure that he was unobserved, he would dodge in. The friends he met there would not, as a rule, report his presence there, or his dissipations. He easily obtained accommodations at

the bar. Most people can look at a boy of seventeen or eighteen years and know to a certainty that he is not twenty-one; but it seems very difficult for the average bartender to distinguish such a boy from a man.

Vainly did Mr. and Mrs. Ogden strive to allay their awful fears. For awhile they answered with angry denial all rumors of Albert's intoxication reported to them; but all disguises fell away at last, and all pretenses to confidence in Albert's good behavior had to be given up. One night, after a sad conference concerning their boy by Mr. and Mrs. Ogden, the latter put on his hat and coat and went out to look for him. Mr. Ogden had never in his life been a frequenter of saloons, and naturally shrank from entering one; but to-night he was too nearly desperate from grief to care for appearances, and went from one saloon to another inquiring for Albert. His exit from the saloon was always followed by comments and discussions, rather less sympathetic for the father than for the son, special mention being made of the fact that Church members are so often brought into disgrace and trouble by their boys. Mr. Ogden finally found Albert in a maudlin state of intoxication, and brought him home in that terrible condition to his mother. They helped the silly, staggering boy up to his room and

to bed, blear-eyed and hiccoughing, his breath laden with the fumes of alcohol, his clothes reeking with tobacco and soiled with barroom sawdust and spittle, and filthy with his own vomit. Then they came down to the sitting-room and almost fell into their easy chairs beside the center table loaded with books and papers, under the bright light of the electric chandelier, and gazed vacantly at the wall, too overwhelmed and broken-hearted to speak. Gradually the attention of Mrs. Ogden became fixed on a picture hanging there before her. It was a picture of Albert in his beautiful and innocent babyhood. A distinguished visitor sojourning once at their home had stood repeatedly before that picture and declared that it was the most beautiful child picture that he had ever seen. How proud Mrs. Ogden had then felt of her motherhood and of her child! In those hours of Albert's sweet and innocent babyhood, what visions she had of the man he would some time be! But how terribly these fond hopes had been blighted, and how hard it was to keep from regretting that he had ever been born, or that he had not died in some of those sicknesses through which she had nursed him with deep anxiety and prayers!

We draw the curtain now upon this scene, than which there can be none more sad: that of the father and mother, whose parental aspirations have

been blighted, and who, while their first-born lies drunk upstairs, are meditating on the years that are gone and dreading the years that are to be.

This is the biography of the boy whose parents presented him at the church altar eighteen years ago for recognition as a child of the Kingdom, and for whose Christian culture both the parents and the Church assumed responsibility. It would be sad enough if only one boy were thus lost in every community and in every generation. But the moral tragedy of Albert's fall and the failure of the Christian home and of the Christian Church to save the boy is being repeated in thousands of homes and Churches and in thousands of communities.

CHAPTER II

THE SOUL OF A BOY

It is certainly worth our while to inquire why the boys born in Christian homes and dedicated at Christian altars are so often lost. There must be some serious failure in adapting the program of home and Church life to the needs and nature of the boy. We must, if possible, ascertain what this failure is.

The two large factors comprehending all the influences which build character and shape destiny are heredity and environment. Heredity determines the original endowment of the individual and contains the secret of conduct and destiny, in so far as these depend upon native tendencies and powers. Environment determines the amount and kind of influence that will be brought to bear by circumstances upon the individual. How an individual of a certain type and with a certain hereditary endowment is going to behave in this world, what he is going to do and become, will depend very largely on his circumstances; for education, conduct, character and destiny grow out of the responses which life makes to environment. On the other hand, it may be said

that the effect of a certain definite environment upon human life depends upon the nature of the person himself; for different natures will respond in different ways to the same influence. As then the issues of life, education, character, and destiny depend upon the responses which one's nature makes to circumstances, it is evident that our problem, when we attempt the preservation of the boy from moral and religious ruin, consists in so shaping his environment that his responses will be normal and proper.

The Boy's Heredity.

The first thing to be considered is the nature of the boy himself. What is he in himself, and with what tendencies, capacities, and powers has he come into the world? What are the potentialities of his nature waiting and ready to express themselves as, at the various stages of his growth, he comes into contact with the world? What sort of responses will it be natural for him to make, especially at the period of adolescence, as he comes into contact with the vast and complex realities of the world and of the human lives around him? That depends on what the boy really is and what is in him, and that is a matter of heredity.

When we raise questions about a boy's heredity, let it be noted that we can get the main facts

without any inquiries at all about his immediate ancestors; for the deepest marks put upon any living thing by the power of heredity are the race marks. The main bulk and weight of those endowments which we get through heredity we get from the race, and not from our immediate parents. We get them through our parents, of course, because they have them; but we get them as our parents did, because we belong to the race. It has been said by a careful student of this subject that the power of our immediate ancestors to resist the hereditary influence of the race and put upon us their individual peculiarities is about as one to sixteen. In this matter of heredity, as affecting the child not yet born, the odds are sixteen to one in favor of the race as against the immediate parents.

Another way of putting the fact under consideration is to say that the law of heredity delivers to the offspring with most certainty and power those elements which have been longest and strongest in the blood and life of the race. Most biologists hold the theory of evolution. According to this theory we have behind us not only the ages of civilized life, but the semi-barbaric and the barbaric ages, and beyond the savage ages of unrecorded time are the unspanned epochs of brute life. One needs not, however, to accept the theory that human life was developed from the lowest forms of animal life,

in order to understand what the principal items of our heredity are. It is certain that those elements which are oldest and most constant in race history are those animal instincts, tendencies, and powers which constitute the primitive and basal elements of our nature. Whatever else we get or fail to get in our heredity, we are sure to get these. People used to say, "Why is it that such a nice Christian man and woman, as Mr. and Mrs. Ogden are, should have a boy so inclined to evil as Albert is?" It was because that stream of heredity which we have been considering, coming down through all the ages of human history, poured into him, as it pours into every normal human life, the animalism and passion that from the beginning have rioted in the blood of the race. It was worth something to Albert, doubtless, that his father and mother were Christians; but their conversion was a very recent and comparatively insignificant fact in race history, so far as heredity was concerned. It had very little to do with Albert's native moral and religious endowments. This is what biology has to say about the doctrine of depravity. There is some difference theoretically between Paul's doctrine of the fall of the race from a state of perfection through Adam's sin, and the consequent depravity of all descendants of Adam, and Darwin's doctrine of the progress of the race upward and away from its brute ancestry; but the

practical bearings of the two theories, so far as the doctrine of depravity is concerned, are one, and if you get away from Paul in his insistence upon the depravity of man, you fall into the hands of Darwin and fare still worse in your argument. When, therefore, a man looks into the face of his baby boy, it is well that he should understand that while this child has almost divine potentialities in his nature, such as led the Psalmist to say, "Thou hast made him a little lower than God and crowned him with glory and honor," he is also first and most certainly an animal, and the lower elements in his nature will constantly and powerfully assert themselves in the earlier stages of his life, and if these be not properly controlled and directed, they will arrest the development of his higher nature and work his moral ruin.

How the Boy Grows.

Now, when we consider the terrible and wonderful potentialities which heredity has deposited in the human soul, we need next to consider how this complex nature will unfold itself naturally as the boy grows. One fact is certain: the boy will not grow in all parts of his nature at once. Some elements of his nature will unfold at one period and some at another, and therefore the elements of his experience are differently proportioned at different times.

New interests develop, and the bent of his inclinations change from time to time. To be acquainted with him at one time of life is not necessarily to know him at another. We may know how to deal with him at one stage of his life, and then make the absurdest and most fatal blunders at another. We need therefore to know the order in which the different elements of his nature unfold themselves, so that we may know what to expect as he continues growing, and may be able to furnish him the proper environment at the successive stages of his being.

Biology throws a strong light on the subject which we are now considering. Scientists tell us that every living thing tends in its development to recapitulate race history. That is to say, the various stages of individual life correspond with the various stages of race life, all being passed through in the same order. The individual recapitulates or goes over in his own life the ground which the race has gone over in its history. The individual grows along the line and in the way that the race has grown. As the history of the race is long and that of the individual is short, it follows that no stage of individual life completely reproduces the corresponding stage of race life; but there is a highly suggestive correspondence between them. The thing which it is practically important for us to observe is that the boy is first predominantly animal, and that in his

development he passes through stages of interest, activity, and experience corresponding with the childhood of the race, its savage, its barbaric, its semi-barbaric and civilized stages of life.

Getting Acquainted With the World.

Let us trace the course of the boy's development. There is, first, the stage of helpless infancy. The boy comes into this world with organs fitted for taking such food as nature provides for him. The reflex nervous system has been developed, and the nerves of sense become acute very early, and he begins an active and eager acquaintance with the material world. He handles and tastes everything he can get hold of. The running away from home, for which he gets innumerable spankings, are due to the fact that sights and sounds attract and lead him on with an eager and quenchless curiosity that forgets all instruction about staying at home or disregards all threats of punishment. To this ceaseless exploration of the world with his five senses he adds endless question-asking as soon as he is able to get instruction through spoken words. This almost interminable bore of child-questioning should be patiently borne by those who are interested in him, and his questions should be answered in the fashion that will be most informing to him, for his questioning expresses the divine thirst for knowledge which is a

part of man's spiritual heritage, and this quest of truth is as divine in the child as it is in the saint and the sage who strive to comprehend the mysteries of the universe. You are insulting a holy passion in the child when you answer his eager "What 's that?" by saying, "O, that is something to make little boys ask questions." That is a funny answer, and may put a funny look on the boy's face, but it does not help him on toward that knowledge of the universe which a divine instinct prompts him to attain. The activity of the child's perceptions during the first six years of his life and the ceaseless bodily activity resulting therefrom accomplish two important ends. They contribute in the most perfect and normal way to the development of the boy's body and to the control and use of it, and they furnish him with that stock of perceptions and concrete ideas which constitutes the basis of his subsequent intellectual life. When the child ends his sixth year he has concluded the most strenuous period of his existence, so far as bodily activity is concerned, and he has learned more things concerning the material world and his relations to it than he will learn in any other six years of his life.

Memory is present and active from the very beginning of a child's life, but during the period now under consideration the memory deals with concrete things and relations; for the memory can deal only

with that which has been experienced, and the child's life is, as yet, mainly in the realm of sensuous perception. The power of imitation is also present from the first, and wonderfully helps in his education. The activity of the child's sense perceptions and memory makes it easy to fix in his mind certain forms of words, but it should be remembered that, as his experience has been very limited, and his reflective faculties have not been to any great extent developed, the words do not mean nearly so much to him as to those who are teaching him. He is really very much less devout than he seems to be when he says words of grace at the table or kneels at his bedside and with folded hands says his "Now I lay me down to sleep."

Imagination and Invention.

A child's imagination becomes quite active during the latter part of the period we are considering, but his imagination, like his memory at this time, must, on account of his limited experience, deal almost wholly with concrete things. He is interested in stories about animate and inanimate objects, animals, plants, rivers, oceans, mountains, and people. You may use the concrete materials and conceptions with which his experience has made him familiar, and he will understand you and be interested in your stories, no matter how strange and outlandish they may be.

Your story may deal with men as tall as houses, or with men so small that you could put one of them under a thimble, and he will be interested in the story and possibly think it true. It is easy to make stories that will interest children. Your boy knows what it is to fall off the bed and hurt himself. He will appreciate your story if you tell him that in the "great big city where the great big people called giants live, there was a little baby about the size of Uncle John who fell off from a great big bed about as high as an elephant an' hurt himself an' cried so loud that they heard him a hundred miles." You can never tire him out telling stories, if you make them deal with such concrete matters as his experience has made known to him.

During the second six years of his life the child gets beyond sensuous perceptions and concrete things into the realm of abstract ideas. He is getting now into the world that lies beyond matter. To some extent he has done this before, but never so fully as he will do in this second six years. He recognizes now very fully a world of facts and forces back of the things he can see and hear. His imagination now puts visible and concrete things into relations with unseen facts and forces, and a new world opens up to him. The powerful operations of his fancy and invention at this period sometimes make him

amazingly inaccurate in his statements. He mixes fact and fancy in the most astounding fashion. Partly because of the satisfaction it gives him, and partly because of the astonishment it creates in others, and sometimes because he does not himself distinguish fact from fancy, he fairly revels in stories that depart widely from the facts. His parents should not be too much worried over these fabrications. They do not signify any unusual measure of depravity in the child unless he is willfully attempting to deceive. He has simply more imagination and invention than the average child and is reveling in the exercise of newly-developed powers. For years other people have entertained him by telling stories that he now knows were not true, and he has made the discovery that he can also tell stories that are interesting to other people. He should be instructed not to mix his facts with fancy when he is supposed to be telling facts only. He must be made to see the wrong of deceiving people. He may be slow in learning the fault of telling untrue stories, as a result of having heard so many lies himself, and having gotten so much satisfaction from hearing them. He may properly be encouraged to tell the most astonishing and interesting stories he can invent, but with the understanding that he is only "making believe."

A Boy's Superstition.

Another result of the boy's psychology at the opening of the second six-year period of his life is his superstititon. The boy's thinking has taken him from the concrete into the abstract, from the seen into the unseen. He has not gotten far enough along in his thinking to know what forces and agencies are at work there, or to recognize there the reign of law and order. He is credulous enough to believe whatever you tell him about the strange world just coming to his notice. You may tell him now about charms and magic and sorcery and incantations, and he will easily believe you. At this period almost any boy can get rid of his warts by some sort of charm or incantation, as I did of mine, but I could not make the charm work against my freckles. Fairy stories, tales of genii and magic, all grotesque and weird relations between the seen and the unseen, appeal to a boy at this time of life. I well remember the theory which became current among the boys of my neighborhood that a snake left dead with its belly toward the sky would bring rain. We demonstrated that theory over and over again. Snakes were plentiful that summer, and we took our "snake sticks" and went after them, and left the dead snakes wrong side up. We soon had the country nearly drowned with rain, and the

streams overflowed their banks. The farmers were greatly inconvenienced and prayed for dry weather; but no dry weather came. When I knew that we had had too much rain, I was careful to leave my snakes right side up where I killed them; but there would always be some fool boy in the neighborhood who would leave his dead snake hanging on the fence with its belly toward the sky, and at sight of it Jupiter Pluvius would weep afresh. And so it kept on raining until horses floundered and reaping-machines dragged axle-deep in the mud of the harvest fields.

It is evident that this naturally superstitious period in a boy's life is opportune for religious instruction. Belief in divine things comes perfectly easy to him. His uncritical mind accepts almost unquestioningly whatever we tell him. He is interested in this unseen world now as he never has been before. He has now an instinctive curiosity and normal appetite to know religious things. Previous to this period, in the case of the average boy, it has not been possible to do much more for him religiously than to accustom him to the use of certain forms of worship, but now it is possible to do a great deal more. It is possible now to fill him with such a sense of God's reality, omnipresence, wisdom, and power as he never felt before. He is able now to believe in angels, devils, ghosts, heaven, hell, communion with God in prayer, special providence and

final judgment. I do not say that a child comes suddenly into such a state of mind, or that all come into this state of mind at a certain age; but I believe this to be a conspicuous feature of the average boy's life during the first half of the second six-year period of his life.

It is evidently a great mistake to let this period of special sensitiveness to religious influence pass without careful religious instruction. Such impressions may now be made upon him and such ideas of God's relation to the world and to human life may now be formed in his mind as it will be difficult, if not impossible, for him to get away from in after years. A few great conceptions may now be firmly fixed in his mind, so that they will remain after a mass of details due to the limitations of his childish experience have passed away. If one could doubt the importance of the religious ideas communicated at this time, or should even feel certain that they will most of them finally be swept away as knowledge increases, he might nevertheless still believe it worth while to give this instruction on account of the stimulating effect it has for the time being on the boy's religious sensibilities. If the whole system of religious ideas communicated to the boy at this time should afterward be swept away, there would still remain a certain amount of religious impressibility, a certain sensitiveness to the unseen and

divine, which would make it possible for him to put other religious ideas in the place of those which he had lost, and so to go on in his religious life.

It goes without argument that the religious instruction given at this time should be as free as possible from conceptions that will not stand the test of advancing knowledge. The fewer religious ideas a boy has to throw overboard when he reaches the stage of criticism, the better it will be for him. The more things he has to throw away, the more skepticism he will feel about the things that remain, and the less respect he will feel for those who have been his teachers and whose leadership in religious matters he still needs. He should be taught to converse with God about things that are of interest and importance to himself, and encouraged to ask Him for what he wants; but he should not be assured that God will grant all his petitions, for one of the things that he will soon and thoroughly learn is that many, if not most, of his petitions will not be granted. He should be taught to believe in God's loving providence over His human children, but not given to understand that this means exemption from sickness, accident, trouble, pain, and death; for he will very soon learn that even good people who pray and do right are not saved from these things. What he should be given to understand is that he may commune with the good God, who will grant

or deny requests according to His own good will, and who will conduct His faithful and obedient children through pain and trouble and accident and misfortune, making "all things work together for good to those who love Him." He should be taught to revere the Bible as the good book, the great book, the best and most wonderful book in the world, the book that tells more than any other book in the world about God and His dealings with men; and the great teachings of the Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord's Prayer, the most beautiful of the Psalms, and the great sayings of Jesus should be indelibly impressed upon his mind.

There are no definite boundaries to this period of life, which I have called the period of superstition. The normal boy is forced into it by that process of mind which carries him from the concrete to the abstract. It is no more certain that he came into it than that, by the same psychological process which brought him into it, he will be taken out of it. He passes out of it as he goes on toward and into the stage of adolescence. He passes out of it as he recognizes the orderly operations of the forces and agencies of the unseen world, which his science studies in school will help him to do, and by the time he reaches his middle teens the critical processes of his expanding mind will have purged all the cruder elements of his superstition away, and he will

be fortunate if he have not also lost some other items of belief which ought to have been retained. We will consider later the religious crisis which is practically certain to come somewhere between his twelfth and twentieth year.

The Boy's Religious Status.

While there is danger that we shall underrate the boy's experience at every stage of his life, there is a likelihood that we shall overrate it, because we instinctively impute our own psychological states to others, when their words or acts seem appropriate to these states. The child often behaves older than he really is or feels, because he is imitative and acts and speaks conventionally. A child upon whose head the water of baptism fell looked up into the preacher's face and exclaimed, "You have broken my heart." Now, this was the language of tragedy, but the child was not having a very tragic experience. She had only caught the words of her mother in expressing pained surprise and disapproval. It is not always as easy to discriminate between a boy's words and his experience as it was in the case of the lad who got up in the meeting and said, "Brethren, I have been walking in this good way for more than forty years, and I am not tired of it yet." We are more likely to be getting a real glimpse into the religious experience of a child when he expresses

himself unconventionally, when he coins a phrase, even though an absurd or unfit one, to express his meaning. A pastor of my acquaintance was working one evening in his garden, attended by a very bright and beautiful little girl. While busy with his hoe, he heard her exclaim, "Hello, God!" and, turning suddenly, saw his sweet child, with her hands clasped behind her back, looking rapturously into a beautiful sky, where the setting sun was peeping over a golden cloud. The face of Moses coming down from the mountain all aglow with the presence of his God could scarcely have been more beautiful than Elsie's face was to her father at that moment. Her unconventional salutation to God was more significant of her religious spirit than were all the prayers she had ever been taught to say. At evening prayer time a boy of my acquaintance penitently confessed his fault, saying to his mother, "When you made me go after an armful of wood I was mad and I said I would n't do it; but something in my stomach said, 'Hubert, mind your mother!'" Such an expression could have come only from a real experience with the inner monitor.

It is important that parents and guardians should have and should give to the child growing up in the home a correct idea of his religious status and of his relation to the Kingdom of God. As he comes into a consciousness of his place in the earthly home

and of his personal relation to other members of the family into which he has been born, he should be assisted to realize his place in the divine family and to think of God as his Father. We are not to think of him as a reprobate. That race inheritance of animalism which we have already considered does not make an alien from the Kingdom of God. Of course he commits sin; but his moral and religious consciousness are at first so dim that his transgressions are not matters of serious turpitude in our sight, and God is no less gracious to him than we are. The fact that he comes into the consciousness and reality of sin in the years of childhood, does not put him beyond the pale of the Kingdom and make him an alien from God. If a child shows his temper and does what he ought not to do, we have no more right to deny his Christianity on this account, and to say that he needs to be converted, than we would have to deny the Christianity of his father and mother and say they need to be converted, if they sometimes lose their temper and say or do what is not exactly right. If a child is called a sinner because he sometimes does or says what is not right, then why should not his pious father and mother be measured by the same standard, and called sinners also, for they sometimes do and say what is not right? Why should we think of children as in bondage to Adamic heredity and needing to be converted,

when, if childhood's limitations of capacity and consciousness are considered, they are just about as blameless and consistent as their Christian fathers and mothers? Most children growing up in Christian homes believe what their fathers and mothers teach them, and purpose and try to do right. We should not deny their Christianity because they do what is wrong now and then, or, if we do, we should judge their devout fathers and mothers in the same way. We should baptize them and then receive them into the Church upon confession of faith as soon as they can intelligently make such confession, and then we should be much more indulgent to their faults than we are to the faults of older people, and we should keep them as consciously as possible in the presence and fellowship of Christ, so that they will continue in the upward way, constantly bringing the lower elements of human nature into subjection to the spiritual. That birth which introduces the child into the human family introduces him also into the divine family, and our part is to recognize his membership in the family and keep him from leaving it.

CHAPTER III

THE SPIRIT OF YOUTH

We have tried thus far to look into the soul of a boy and see what his instincts, capacities, and aptitudes are. We have regarded the period of childhood as covering the first twelve years. Let us now regard the period of youth, or adolescence, as covering the next twelve years, and give our attention especially to the first half of this period.

No definite year can be set down as the beginning of the adolescent life, but it is practically certain that by the fourteenth year the physiological and psychological marks of nascent manhood may be discovered in the normally constituted lad. By this time he is perceptibly losing interest in the things of childhood and coming into the state of consciousness that belongs to manhood. He is in a state of transition, and nothing but wise and sympathetic treatment can save him from such confusion, perplexity, embarrassment and stress of experience as he has never had before.

The Boy's Self-Consciousness.

The early stage of adolescence is sometimes called "the necktie period." This means that the boy is

much more regardful now than hitherto concerning his personal appearance. This concern is not limited to the necktie, which is, perhaps, the only showy thing in conventional apparel, affording the youth an opportunity to express his appreciation of color; but he is considerate, as never before, of his general appearance. The time has now come when he can be depended on to wash his neck, trim and clean his finger nails, and blacken his boots, and brush his clothes. He now feels the importance of his personal appearance generally, and is more susceptible than ever before to mortification on account of soiled or ill-fitting clothes. If his associations are with tidy, well-dressed young people, he is likely to feel keenly his inability to be conventionally dressed.

Not only does he wish to be conventionally dressed, but he cares more now than he used to care about etiquette and the proprieties of conduct generally. He wants to know what is good form in the society he keeps, and any bad breaks or blunders due to ignorance or awkwardness give him keen distress. And he is, as a rule, awkward at this period in consequence of the rapid bone-growth now taking place, and giving another size and different proportions to the bodily instrument which he has to use, making a graceful and perfect mastery of it for a while almost impossible. He is, therefore, very liable to all ungraceful action to confused and

improper speech at important moments in social life.

It is perfectly natural that there should be a certain mental awkwardness at this time of greatest bodily awkwardness, for the soul life is now confused by new elements of consciousness, perplexing the boy's judgment and filling him with suspense and uncertainty, so that he is not only misunderstood by others, but he hardly knows what to make of himself, his changing moods, and vacillating purposes.

His Social Feeling.

The new elements of consciousness are due to the fact that certain instincts and impulses which belong to manhood are now asserting themselves, and are producing states of mind and feeling to which he is unaccustomed. Let us see what these new elements of soul-life are.

The first thing to be noticed is what we may call his social consciousness. As a child, he always had a desire for companionship, but now he has come into a new sense of himself as an individual unit in the social world. He appreciates the fact of social organization, and is moved by a powerful instinct to seek some place for himself in the social organism. He begins to feel the power of social affinities and to have close and boon companionships. He natu-

rally seeks for some fellowship that will express the dominant impulses and ideas of his own soul. Becoming conscious of the fellowships organized and organizing around him, he experiences a painful sense of isolation if he can not find a place for himself in some of them. If he has initiative and leadership, he will very probably subject some other boys to his leadership, and organize something to suit himself. If a good boy, he will rejoice to be a member of some organization for purposes of culture or service; if he is a bad boy, he will be drawn into the fellowship of some society bent on mischief. A boy in his early teens appreciates team work and is capable of great self-sacrifice in the interest of the organization to which he belongs, and the average boy is capable of immense enthusiasm in the interest of causes which appeal to his better nature. Such is the power of the social consciousness and of the social pull on a boy's soul, that he is often drawn by his companions away from those courses of life to which he is accustomed, and completely breaks the bonds of parental and home influence. This awakening social consciousness of the boy is something that his parents and guardians must reckon with very carefully.

Another element complicating the soul-life of the adolescent boy is the sexual instinct. He does not himself fully realize the meaning of this awakening

regard for persons of the opposite sex. The effect it will have upon him depends much upon the manner in which he has been prepared for this period of his existence. He may have come to this time of life pure and unspoiled, or he may have been perverted by premature and vulgar versions of information and by vicious habits. In the latter case, he will regard with disquieting and vulgar lust those for whom he ought to feel a tender, chivalrous and almost reverential awe. The thing for us to note now is that the mating instinct upon which the family is founded is awakening within him, and drawing him with increasing urgency, and making him more anxious than he ever was before to make a good impression upon others, especially upon his girl friends. However much he may fight against it, and seek to disguise it, one of the most powerful, destiny-shaping passions of humanity has come into his life to abide there, and no adequate guardianship of the boy can safely disregard it; for while it ought to be one of the most ennobling forces of his life during the period of adolescence, it may prove one of the most demoralizing.

Vocational Interest.

Very naturally, while the social and matrimonial instincts are ripening within him, the boy becomes interested in the question of his future occupation,

which has its relation to his future position in society and to the establishment of his home. I will not say that there is a vocational instinct, but I may, perhaps, be excused for using such an expression to indicate the deepening interest which the boy feels in his future business. What he is going to do is a question which occurs to him with increasing frequency and urgency. It is not true, as some people think, that the average boy is lazy. He is, on the other hand, inclined to be active, and his observed disinclination to work is due to the fact that he is asked to do a kind of work which is for some reason difficult and uninviting, or that he fails to perceive any advantage to himself arising from the work he is asked to do. But the average boy feels the need of money, and if it is not given to him, he works for it quite willingly, and most boys from twelve to eighteen years of age would rather be employed in some gainful occupation yielding fair wages and affording opportunities for advancement than to be in school or to be doing nothing at all. A boy's fondness for gymnastics and the amount of vim which he will put into outdoor games clearly demonstrates his inclination to physical activity, and should make it evident that he needs only what will appeal to him as a good reason for working to make him a fairly earnest and cheerful worker. It should be remembered, too, that if he be not given work to

do of a kind that appeals to him, he will be as discontented as men are when necessarily idle, or compelled to do work they do not like.

His Critical Instinct.

Another feature of adolescent psychology is what we will call the critical instinct, though it is not an instinct in any true sense of that word. Somewhere in his early teens the normal boy is strongly inclined to challenge conventional opinions. He now requires evidences or authorities for which he would never in his earlier years have asked. This does not mean that he has suddenly lost respect for his parents and teachers, or that he means to be unreasonable and contrary. It means that his mental faculties are rapidly increasing in power, and that his knowledge is also increasing, and that he is discovering that many things which he once thought true are not true, or that the reasons he once had for believing them are not valid. This discovery of the unsoundness of his former opinions and of the fallibility of his parents and teachers is sometimes quite a shock to him, especially when it leads him to question opinions which seem to be of vital importance. A multitude of new facts are thrusting themselves upon his attention, and he finds difficulty in thinking them into a coherent system. Having been compelled to give up some opinions, he suspects

that he must give up others. He is now becoming a critic and a philosopher on his own account. He will make some mistakes, will doubt and deny things which ought not to be given up, and will later discover some of his errors and come back to his former opinions. This disposition of the boy to challenge accepted opinions and to reassure himself should not be regarded as a perversity. It simply expresses his hunger for truth and the fact that maturing judgment is making him critical. A divine instinct is prompting him, now on the verge of responsible manhood, "to prove all things and hold fast that which is true." This radicalism of youth is really something to be thankful for, because it is through the challenging of traditions and customs by young life principally that the successive generations of men take their longest strides forward. This fearless challenging of youth should not be regarded as an irreverence and impertinence, but as a legitimate state of adolescent mind, and should be met, not with impatient rebuke, but with sound and patiently delivered arguments.

His Self-Assertion.

Another feature of adolescent life, especially in the case of a boy, is the disposition to assert himself, to assert his own opinions, to assume responsibility for his own conduct, to question the right of others

to rule over him, and to take to himself a larger liberty in the matter of his conduct. Conscious that he has arrived at the age of accountability, he proposes to relieve others of their responsibility for him and to go his own way. He feels that he is no longer a child, and does not propose to be treated as a child. He wants to get loose from his mother's "apron strings." While other boys of his age are enjoying a larger liberty, he proposes to have more liberty himself. He feels that it is not necessary that he should be constantly watched by his parents or compelled to give an account of all that he does. He is likely to be irritated by such inquisitiveness concerning his conduct and his whereabouts as he would not have resented at any former period of his life, and with or without the consent of his parents and guardians he is likely to go ahead and do very much as he pleases, unless they, in the assertion of their authority, make very serious trouble for him in the case of his disobedience. And so, unless the boy is exceptionally patient and good-natured, and the parents very wise, there is likely to come into the relations of the boy and his parents a serious strain in the early years of adolescence.

This disposition of the boy to assume personal responsibility and assert himself should be accepted as a matter of course by parents and friends of the boy. It is the normal and proper thing. Something

would be wrong if the boy came into the period of personal responsibility and declined to act upon his responsibility. The sense of responsibility implies the right and duty of acting according to one's own ideas. To be true to himself and assert his own individuality is a part of manhood's glory. The impulse of the youth to strike out and take the course approved by his own judgment is a natural and divine impulse. The parents have a just and natural authority over him and are responsible for him until, as he enters the realm of manhood, responsibility passes from parents to son; then parental authority ceases, except in so far as it can be based upon reason and persuasion such as the boy can appreciate.

His Stress and Trouble.

The features of adolescent psychology which have been described account for the trial which so often comes to parents when their boys pass into their teens and enter into associations that seem to parents unwise and harmful, and, under the influence of these associations, form habits that are contrary to parental teaching, and challenge the opinions which have previously been accepted as a matter of course, and openly or by indirection resist parental authority. Many parents regard this strain in the relation between themselves and the adolescent boy as sheer perversity on his part, due to the influence of

one or more evil companions, and do not realize the fact that very important changes are taking place, by a normal process, in the soul of the boy himself, giving him a new view of things, making him skeptical of opinions heretofore held, and defiant of authority. Their view of the matter is often partly true, but in most of these cases there is very much to be said for the boy, who needs more intelligent help than he is getting at this particular stage of his being; and his ebulitions of anger, his slamming the door as he leaves home threatening not to return, are indications of the stress of his own experience.

It would help matters very much in every home where boys are passing into their teens or through them, if not only the parents, but the boys also, could be made to see the meaning and normality of the changes which nature works in the human soul at this particular time of life.

CHAPTER IV

HOW THE BOY WAS LOST

We have been studying the nature of the growing boy, particularly noting the features of adolescent tendency and consciousness. If we now consider the environment of the average boy, it is easy to see how and why so many boys are morally and religiously lost. It is easy to see how and why the average boy's peril becomes serious at the period of adolescence, and how broad and easy is the path to ruin when he is at the most critical period of his life. Let us look into this matter carefully, limiting our attention just now to the period of adolescence.

The direction which a boy's life really takes is the resultant of the two influences, heredity and environment. Under the term heredity we include his whole endowment of intellect, sensibility and will. By his environment we mean everything in his situation and circumstances which exerts an influence upon him, and to which his being consciously or unconsciously responds.

Latent Barbarism.

Attention has been called to the biological law that every living thing recapitulates race history in its

own development, the changes taking place in individual life corresponding more or less with the successive stages of race life. The environments of race history are not reproduced, and therefore no individual actually and outwardly repeats the phases of primitive, ancestral life; but the phases of organic life, physiologically and psychologically are, in a general way, recapitulated in the individual's growth from the beginning of embryonic life to maturity. The thing to be noted in this connection is that the adolescent stage of individual life corresponds to the barbaric, or semi-barbaric, stage of race life. Consider how the instincts and tendencies of the boy in the first half of his teens hark back to primitive states of mind. At this period tales of war, of adventure, of the wild, free, roving life of the hunter and trapper, the perils of the immigrant, the daring deeds and hair-breadth escapes of the scout, appeal to him strongly. He greatly admires feats of physical prowess, and athletic sports are his delight. A Christian mother went out to the barn one day to see what the children were doing. Finding everything quiet about the barn, she went on into the woods nearby at the edge of the river. Here she found her own boys and the preacher's boys playing Indian. They were lying behind logs and hiding behind trees, and dodging from one place of shelter to another, firing imaginary guns and scalping fallen enemies.

That popular paper, *The Youth's Companion,* has reigned long over the hearts of the American boys, largely because of the appeal which it has made to these primitive instincts. The popularity of "Tom Sawyer" and "Huckleberry Finn" is another illustration of the fact that a boy's heart responds to that which makes it appeal to primitive instincts. Even when young men of exceptional intelligence are gotten together in colleges and universities, the interclass rivalries and strifes and the brutal hazings, more especially in the case of the young men who are attracted to military academies, indicate how close the boy of civilized life is, in his psychology, to the barbarian. This is no reflection on the boy or on his parents. He can not help it, neither can they. The fact simply is that he is here on the verge of manhood with the primitive instincts and passions of manhood rioting in his blood, and not yet in possession of that large intelligence and mature judgment and those finer and more fully developed moral and religious sensibilities which, according to this same law, are the best and therefore the last things to mature in a human being.

What does this practically mean? It means that the crude, low, vicious, and unethical phases of the boy's environment make an appeal to him at this stage of life which they can not make at a later stage

of his development. He has affinities for these same things now which he will not have later, unless, yielding to temptation, he becomes perverted, and his normal development arrested. The boy is now at his nearest approach to the barbarian. The sport, the bully, the bold young man defying convention and authority in his manner of life, the fast young man with his jewelry and flashy dress, his cane and cigars, daring to tipple, boasting of his successful bets and intimating his familiarity with the worst vice to which men are prone—this type of individual and these phases of life appeal to the adolescent boy with a power which his serious father and Christian mother can hardly understand, though his father may, possibly, be able to remember a time when these very things had some attraction for him.

The Peril of Idleness.

The peril of the boy is often greatly increased by the fact that he is unemployed, for this exposes him more completely to the evil element of his environment. There are several hours between the afternoon session of the public school and bedtime, in which an active boy is almost certain to be out and around town, unless he is held to his studies by an almost abnormal interest or a somewhat unusual exercise of parental authority, or unless some form of business claims his attention. It may, perhaps, be

truthfully said that the average boy has the most of this period for loafing and amusing himself. Then there are the long summer vacations, which are to multitudes of boys long seasons of idleness. What is the idle boy to do? He will not sit quietly at home. He will seek company and pleasant excitement of some sort. When he goes out to find agreeable companionship with which to occupy his time, it is practically certain that he can not, even if he so desires, have the company of the busy lawyer, doctor, merchant, or laboring man. His idle hours will not be spent with the best elements of society, for the best people are busy and can not give him their attention. The probability is that he will obtain the company of other boys, who, like himself, have nothing to do, and this will be the worse rather than the better sort of boys. But every community has some fully grown men who ought to be at work, but have not energy and character enough to be so occupied, and the idle boy will be almost certain to make the acquaintance of these. The virtuous and industrious citizen will not have time for the boy who wanders about seeking agreeable companionship; but the lazy loafer sitting on a dry-goods box and chewing tobacco, smoking or spitting at flies on the walk and telling dirty stories, will give his attention to the boy. If the boy does not find entertainment and company on the street, he can

find these in the tobacco stores, the pool and billiard rooms. These places are refuges for idle, company-seeking persons, and furnish about the most demoralizing company that a boy in his teens can find without going to the dives of the city. The boy who resorts to the rendezvous of the idle and loafing elements of the populace is practically certain to acquire the tobacco habit. If this is contrary to the example of his father and against the wish of his parents, it brings some loss of self-respect and weakens the restraints which hold him back from still further dissipations. The tobacco has, moreover, a bad effect upon the nerves and finer capacities and sensibilities of the boy, and weakens his defense against temptations to do worse. Even if he does not enter saloons he will find opportunities to drink through the accommodation of some of his friends, and this indulgence still further weakens the power of moral restraint and hurries him along the downward way. Long before he reaches his majority he will obtain, in almost any community where the liquor traffic is permitted, accommodations at the bar. But even if accommodations at the bar are denied him, the company he finds in the saloon will prepare him for the worst vices to which men are given.

The fascinations of gambling are well known, and gambling devices abound in the cities of the land, especially in the places where men resort for amuse-

ment, visitation, and dissipation. The average boy is not sufficiently guarded by wide intelligence or moral sensibility to shield him from the fascinations of the chances of getting money so easily. When he sees well-dressed and even reputable men throwing dice on the tobacco counter to see who shall pay for the cigars, or operating fortune-wheels or slot-machines, he sees no very strong reason why he should not do the same. Then a few instances of good luck in petty gambling are liable to give to the business a fascination which will persist in spite of many losses.

Soon or late the boy whose companions are idle and dissipating fellows is certain to be touched by the social evil. Let it be remembered that the instinct which lies at the foundation of the family is one of the most ineradicable and imperious, and remember also that the boy beginning to grow a beard is touched by the power of this strange appetite and piqued by the mystery of the sexual relation. Suppose, in addition to this, that before he left high school he had school-mates confiding to him their illicit adventures with girls of his own acquaintance. Consider, too, that the police news and the scandals of the divorce court are brought to him by the newspapers. He is also certain, in the company he keeps, to become well aware of the scandals that are whispered about even in polite society. Anthony Com-

stock and his society, in their efforts to prevent the circulation of indecent publications, have confiscated and destroyed tons upon tons of the lewdest possible literature and pictures depicting vice in the most alluring manner. And this evil business goes on because there are tons upon tons of this literature and these pictures which the officers of the law do not succeed in capturing, but which find their way into the hands of the men, and especially the boys, whom they were designed to pervert. There are those in every community whose business is vice, whose living is in it, and who seek customers as persistently and as adroitly as the most skillful solicitors seek legitimate trade. These will be practically certain to find and solicit the idle boy who has found his place in the ranks of the loafers in the tobacco stores, pool and billiard halls, and in the saloons of the city or village.

Attention has been called to the fact that the boy, in the early years of adolescence, is at a stage of his development corresponding to the barbaric stage of race development. The animal instincts and passions are rioting in his blood as they do in the barbaric man. The large vision, the mature judgment, the lofty and settled purpose and fine sensibilities of manhood, which are the last things to mature in individual development, have not yet come into the boy's life sufficiently to protect and steady him.

Were the boy's moral and religious sensibilities and expanding intellect to be arrested in their growth, he would remain in a psychological state very much resembling that of the barbaric man. What, then, can be expected of boys but that they will be powerfully influenced by the barabaric and unethical features of our modern life, and that in multitudes of cases they will be swept into dissipation?

It is important that we should appreciate the relation of idleness to the demoralization of countless multitudes of boys. Unless a full-grown man is made of the finest stuff, we expect him to be somewhat demoralized by a long-continued inability to get work. When inability to get work becomes disinclination to work he is well started on the downward road. I knew a man who was diligent, capable, well esteemed, and took good care of a large family. He got injured, or claimed to be injured in a railway wreck, and sued the company for damages. Until the trial came off, it was necessary for him to desist from work in order to make plausible his claim to have suffered serious injury. This loafing gave him the first real good chance he had ever had to get acquainted with other men who had no business, and to become familiar with the haunts of the idle and dissipated. Through idleness and evil companionship he soon fell into bad habits. When his lawsuit came to an end, and he secured

a considerable sum of money from the railway company, he was so far degenerated as to have largely lost his inclination to earn a living honestly and take proper care of his family, and so he went on from bad to worse. When, on account of strikes and lockouts, large companies of men are left for awhile in idleness, we fully expect that they will degenerate. Why should we imagine that it will be otherwise with boys? The fact is that for a boy to be out of school and not in business for any considerable portion of his time, results very commonly in his getting out of touch with the best elements of society and into close contact with the worst elements. And this is the lot of the average boy at a psychological stage of his existence when his moral and religious peril is greatest.

Repudiation of Authority.

We have made mention of the critical spirit which comes with adolescence. The enlarging vision of the world, the new views concerning many subjects necessitated by this enlarging vision, the difficulty of fitting new facts into old theories, the growing distrust of authority resulting from the conclusion that many things which have been taught him are not really true, all result in a strong and growing tendency to challenge received opinions and re-examine the grounds of belief. This is often noticeable in

the boys who have not been perverted by bad company or waywardness of any kind. The most serious and devout lads often become quite distressed by doubts concerning the religious teachings they have received. They become aware of the fact that among Christian people there are very important differences of opinion, that there are several great historical religions, each having its sacred literature, supposedly inspired. They often cease to read their Bibles with the old unquestioning faith. Though they have never known any literature of criticism or infidelity, they get into trouble over things recorded in the Bible. They read some things which seem contradictory and irreconcilable. The effect of science studies is to make miracles more difficult of belief. There are apparent discrepancies between Biblical conceptions and those of modern science. The boy of fifteen years finds it harder than he did at the age of nine to believe that an ax head floated on the water, that Jonah continued alive three days in the body of the whale, and that Joshua's prayer lengthened the day of a great battle for the accommodation of the Israelites. He likewise finds it harder to believe that the Israelite leader, Joshua, was really commanded by Jehovah to ruthlessly destroy all the captives taken in certain Canaanite engagements, not sparing even innocent women and children. A wide-awake fifteen-year-old boy who is

devout enough to continue reading the Bible finds a good deal to trouble and perplex him, and if his relation to pious parents is confidential enough to encourage frankness on his part, he is likely to make them aware that very serious doubts are disturbing the peace of his soul. But the boy who is not naturally and deeply religious finds it easier to break away from the authority of the Bible and to conclude that his teaching about the inspiration of the Bible has been mistaken and false. And if he is falling into evil ways, and is irritated by the censure of his parents and religious teachers, he is liable to turn away from the Church and Sunday school, and to develop antipathies that will make him a hostile critic of the Bible. Then he will be confirmed in his doubt and opposition by his evil associates. Some of his worldly and vile companions will be keen-witted enough to help him to see objections to the Bible and will make him aware of the fact that certain famous books have been written against it. And so that spirit of investigation and criticism which was divinely intended to emancipate the rising generation from bondage to old errors and help young men into purer light and clearer vision becomes, in the case of the boy who has broken loose from the restraints of home and Church, a factor in the complete breaking down of religious faith and moral manhood.

Thus it will be seen that the difficulty of saving a boy from his bad associates and evil ways is intensified by those elements of adolescent life which, in the case of the unperverted boy, help him on to the most magnificent manhood. The progress of the race, its ability to get from bad ideas and customs to better ones, is largely due to the critical instinct of youth, its disposition to challenge long-accepted opinions, to throw away traditions which can not justify their hold upon the human mind, to re-examine the ground of belief, to exercise the right of private judgment and to follow it. But when a boy is influenced by evil associates and held by the fascination of sin, and, having entered the downward way, is angered by censure and rebuke, and his pugnacity aroused by commands and prohibitions, the instincts of free thought and self-assertion so vitally related to human progress, are prostituted to the work of combating the parents and friends who are trying to save him from destruction. Then he flings his criticisms right and left, he challenges authorities whom he ought to respect, he angrily asserts his own rights and responsibilities, and is brought to ruin all the more complete through these normally divine instincts and impulses of adolescence. The worst things are the best things gone wrong; and the boys who have the best stuff in them go, if once thoroughly perverted, to the worst extremes.

The Case of Albert Ogden.

The first chapter of this book tells the story of Albert Ogden's ruin. That story is written from the standpoint of the Christian home and Church, and shows the boy breaking one after another the ties that it was hoped would bind him to Christian faith and manhood. He was born in a Christian home and recognized as a child of the Kingdom at the altar of the church, and in due time made a member of the Sunday school, of the Young People's Society, and of the Church. But the ties of home and Church were not strong enough to hold him, and he got away. This story could be rewritten from the viewpoint which we have now reached in our discussion of the boy's nature and environment, and it could be shown that it was perfectly natural and easy for him to get away. A discerning person might have seen that such was likely to be the case. Albert was a normally-constituted boy, and his nature unfolded itself in the natural way; but at every step of his development he felt the pressure and responded to the influence of the evil element in his environment. Being what he was, and what the average boy is, it was almost as natural, under the circumstances, that he should go wrong as that he should go right. Mr. Ogden had no use for Albert in his business, nor was there any urgent financial

reason why the latter should have employment; and while he often talked about getting a job, he did not hunt for one with much persistency, and when he had work he relinquished his position on slight provocation. Therefore he had nothing to do but to amuse himself after school hours and on Saturdays, and during the long summer vacations. He got out of touch with the better boys and into more intimate associations with the worst boys in town. This meant initiation into every kind of evil, and as Albert approached manhood his intimacy with bad men was added to his fellowship with bad boys; so he just naturally went on into all the evil that appealed to him. When animal passion was rioting in his blood, when the dawning sense of manhood inclined him to criticism and self-assertion, while yet the finest moral and religious sensibilities were undeveloped and judgment was raw and immature, when he was at his nearest approach psychologically to the barbarian, then it was that through neglect of the home and Church and society the barbarous and unethical elements of the social environment were permitted to assail him, and he responded to the evil influence much as it should have been expected that he would.

In the first place, before the period of adolescence came, both home and Church had failed to do their utmost to fortify him against the ordeal that was

coming. Mr. and Mrs. Ogden were never deeply spiritual people, and Albert had seldom in his life heard prayers offered by his own father and mother. Mr. Ogden had been very much occupied with his business, and Mrs. Ogden had been all her life quite busy with her household duties, her club studies and her Church work, so there was seldom time in the morning for family prayers, and late hours and many evenings out by one or both parents made impossible any evening worship in which it would have been possible for Albert to participate. Then, too, although his parents promised at the time of his baptism that he should be taught, "as soon as he should be able to understand," the catechism and such other things as he should understand in order to his religious welfare, there had never been a catechism in the house. The matter of his religious instruction had been delegated almost wholly to the Church. Albert's father might have done a good deal for him in the matter of religious instruction, and his mother might have done much for his edification religiously, if they had not been so busy in many other ways. A great deal might have been done in the second six years of Albert's life to prepare him for the crisis which the third six years were certain to bring; but that precious opportunity had been permitted to pass away only partially improved. The Church meant to do its duty by Albert, and godly men and

women looked with sorrow on him in his downward career; but the Church did rather badly and inefficiently that which it tried to do, and left unattempted much that it should have done. It had practically nothing but its Sunday school, its preaching services, and its prayer-meetings to offer Albert as a counter attraction to all the influences which were drawing him away from God and heaven. Now, there are a great many full-grown and fairly good adults who are not powerfully drawn to preaching services and prayer-meetings, and all Sunday school workers know the difficulty of getting grown-up people to attend Sunday school. It was not strange that Albert and the other boys got tired of the Sunday school long before they finally gave it up, for, from the standpoint of modern psychology and pedagogy, it was very ill-adapted to entertain and edify boys of Albert's age. The text of the Sunday school lesson often had very little in it that any teacher could make interesting to the boys. When the Church offered so little that Albert wanted, when it had become so little interesting to him that he came only as a matter of accommodation to his friends who were urging him, trivial matters finally served to put an end altogether to his attendance upon any of its services. So Albert went to the devil because it was easy. A boy who had been divinely committed for safe-keeping into the

care of a Christian home and Church was weakly surrendered to the adversary through failure to minister diligently and wisely to his needs, through failure to occupy his time and attention and to employ his abounding energies and spirit, even while the worst things in society were directly and powerfully appealing to him. And so he was lost, and no one knows whether he can ever be recovered. It would certainly have been much easier for a Christian home and Church to preserve a boy that God handed over to them than to rescue this young man who is now keeping close to the devil in the far country of dissipation. A Church which has not grace and sense enough to save its boys is not likely to be very successful in winning them back. Looking at the boy himself, at his nature and needs, and considering the influences brought to bear upon him by the evil element of his environment, we can not wonder that the boy is often lost; but we may fairly wonder that those whose careless infidelity to trust permits the oft-repeated tragedy, do not "repent in sackcloth and ashes."

CHAPTER V

HOW TO SAVE THE BOY

We have considered the nature of the boy and the way in which his nature unfolds in the process of his growth, and we have seen how at every step of the way he is imperiled by the evil element of his environment. If he is to be saved from perversion and from arrested development along the higher lines of his being, the vicious element in his environment must be displaced by the good, or the good made strong enough to overcome the evil. The problem of saving the boy is the problem of so shaping his environment that the responses of his entire life will be right, and so that they will be right at every stage of his progress from infancy to manhood. His mind must be fed with proper food and his sensibilities stimulated in the right way. This means that he must be rightly taught by precept and example, and that the associations and activities of his life must be such as to develop the higher nature and subordinate the lower to it. In other words, the problem of saving the boy is the problem of treating him properly.

Let us now try to survey the whole life of the

boy and go with him in our thought and see what can be done for him at every step of his journey.

The Period of Childhood.

The first thing to be done for a boy is to give him a home in which there is a religious spirit and atmosphere. He knows no reason, at first, why prayers should be said at all, or why the eyes are closed, the hands clasped, the body bowed in prayer, or why people move softly and solemnly in the place of public worship. But inasmuch as he is by nature imitative, he will be led by devout example to acquire the habit of reverence in his own behavior. This is well for him, because there is a vital relation between an impulse and the act which expresses it, such that the act expressing an impulse reacts upon the sensibilities and stimulates the impulse which it expressed. This law underlies the well-known fact that action kindles enthusiasm. Therefore the reverent behavior which a boy acquires as a result of devout example at home, on the Sabbath, in his treatment of the Bible, and in his deportment at church, insures that his religious sensibilities will be awakened and properly stimulated at the earliest possible stage of his growth. It is obvious from our present point of view that children should not be allowed to make a playhouse of the church.

Those who manage junior societies and drill the Sunday school children for special exercises, as at Christmas or Easter time, should not allow them to run to and fro, playing hide-and-seek among the pews, scurrying through the pulpit and climbing over the altar rail. Such conduct helps to destroy that reverence for the house of God which is a real element of power in religious education. The boy's first need, therefore, is a home and Church in which there is sincere and consistent recognition of the unseen but ever-present One, "in whom we live and move and have our being."

The time soon comes when the boy can be taught some simple forms of prayer that will help him to recognize and believe in the great unseen Friend, and seek the protection and help of that Friend in his own life. Even though religious sensibilities are not aroused by the prayers that are said, the child is thus helped to begin a communion and fellowship with God, which may become very intense and real in after-life. It will be wise, as soon as the boy matures sufficiently to carry on a conversation of his own with God, to encourage him to do so, for this will intensify his impression of fellowship with an unseen person. A little girl who had been taught to pray in this free manner, while chatting with God on her knees one evening at her bedside, suddenly exclaimed, "O God, excuse me; I've got to tell

grandma something." Then away she ran to her grandmother, after which she returned, and, kneeling down, resumed her perfectly delightful conversation with God. A boy can be helped into this fashion of communing freely with God, and it will be good for him; but, as I have said before, he should not be taught that God will surely grant his petitions, lest, when he learns from experience that such is not the case, he will lose faith in the unseen Friend, and cease to pray. Let him be taught rather to leave his petitions with the unseen Friend, to be granted or denied as He thinks best.

As soon as the boy can see enough meaning in them to make them interesting to him, he should be taught the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the great passages in the Psalms and Prophets, in the sermons and sayings of Jesus and the letters of the apostles. A large store of these great words should be put into his mind at the time when the verbal memory is very retentive, and he should be made so familiar with them that they never can be quite forgotten. As his complex being unfolds itself, these sayings will, by the law of association, be brought back to his remembrance over and over by the myriad facts and relationships of life. Consciously or unconsciously he will be constantly building his life upon these great passages of Scripture, and in the perplexity and stress of great experiences

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they will help him to keep his moral and religious bearings, and interpret his relations and duties to God and man.

It will be advisable, of course, before he passes out of childhood into adolescence, to instruct him thoroughly in some simple catechism. It is not best to use for this purpose catechisms that have been framed by theologians to define and guard subtle and difficult points of doctrine; but a very simple catechism putting in the plainest manner possible the most vital elements of religious belief, so that the boy may have in his mind a simple and irrefutable system of religious ideas with which he can articulate the knowledge and experience of coming years.

If it were compatible with the limitations set for this discussion, it would be easily possible not only to demonstrate that the average Christian home falls very far short of its duty with respect to the boy's religious education, even before he is twelve years old, but that this failure contributes positively to the religious confusion and unbelief which adolescence and maturity often bring. It would also be possible to show beyond question that the right education of the boy up to his twelfth or fourteenth year would almost certainly result in the continuation and development of his religious life, unless exceptional circumstances conspired to pervert him.

Mention has already been made of a period of su-

perstition occurring normally in a boy's life somewhere from his sixth to his tenth year, resulting from that process of mental growth which takes a boy from the realm of the concrete into the abstract and unseen. This period should be recognized as specially opportune for religious instruction, and the utmost endeavor given to the work of stimulating the boy's religious sensibilities and filling his mind with the great fundamental ideas of religion. He should be given a system of ideas as far removed as possible from doubtful matters and details of doctrine which may not stand the test of the critical age quite certain to follow. In the realm of religious ideas there are many matters of doubt and controversy, and zealous parents and teachers are often tempted to preoccupy the boy's mind with certain ideas which they find their Christian neighbors doubting or denying, thus taking advantage of his uncritical temper. This is a very dangerous procedure, often working the greatest disaster when the critical period comes on; for the larger place they have been given in the boy's system of religious ideas and the deeper root they have taken in his own being, the more disastrous the result will be if they do not finally stand the test of his riper thinking. Cultivate his religious sensibilities and work a few great fundamental religious ideas deeply into the structure of his soul, and he will be more

likely to keep in touch with God in the stress of his future thinking and experience.

Chief responsibility for the boy's moral and religious education rests, of course, upon the parents and the home. It is a very serious mistake to leave the boy untaught at home and to depend mainly upon the Church. But the Church exists, and should powerfully supplement the instruction given in the home. The Church's main dependence for this work is upon the Sunday school. The Sunday school will do vastly more for childhood than it has done, when in the light of modern psychology it applies true and well-recognized principles of pedagogy to the work of religious education. Main reliance in Sunday school work for children must be put upon the narrative portions of Scripture, and especially those narratives which naturally appeal to children. To use the same portion of Scripture as the basis of instruction for all the classes in the school is pedagogically absurd. The Scriptures are rich in materials for the instruction of childhood, but instructors must have the sense and diligence to hunt out these portions suitable for the purpose, and then use them. Efficiency in Sunday school work should not be sacrificed to idleness or considerations of economy. The materials of Scripture suited to the religious instruction of the child should be supplemented liberally by materials drawn from

other sources. Real life and current literature are full of instances of wisdom, duty, heroism, and divine providence as well suited to the purpose of instructing children as are the Bible stories, and this material should be freely and powerfully used. No regard for the Sunday school as a Bible school should be allowed to interfere with the use of any other material which will enhance its religious efficiency. It is better to get large results in moral and religious education by using all the materials available, than to depend almost exclusively upon Biblical material and get less satisfactory results.

The Period of Adolescence.

We are ready now to consider the boy in the third six-year period of his life, the earlier part of his youth, or adolescence. The most marked physiological and psychological changes come between the twelfth and eighteenth year, and in this period the moral "set" or "bent" of manhood is generally determined. The most important revelations of what was put into the boy by heredity are made at this time, and at no other time is the boy's environment so determinative of his destiny. It is very important that we should understand him and help him to understand himself at this time, and that the best possible direction should be given to his developing powers.

Let it be observed, then, that he is psychologically at his nearest approach to the barbarian. There is nothing ripe in him but the lower elements of manhood. The passions common to men of every age and condition are rioting in his blood, but he is yet without the large observation, the mature judgment, and the fineness of moral and religious sensibility coming naturally at the close of the adolescent period. Some of the elements coming with more or less power into soul-life at this period are the following:

1. The social impulse, a new appreciation of society as a great, complex organization of social units, together with a growing concern about his own place in the social organism; a new interest in society and in himself as a member of society.

2. The sexual instinct, which is the mating instinct, creating a new and peculiar interest in womankind, and especially in his girl acquaintances and friends. The sexual instinct combines with his social feeling to heighten his interest in society and increase his sensitiveness concerning his social position.

3. Correlated with sexual and social feeling, and involved with them in the shaping of manhood's destiny, is the vocational interest, or practical business instinct, becoming ever more insistent as the indispensable means and condition of realizing the

ambitions budding out of the social and sexual instincts. The normal adolescent is moved by a practical impulse to earn some money to meet his increasing needs and to be qualifying for some vocation giving promise of a competency and a respectable position in society. He would rather be in business than going to school or living idly, unless he sees the relation of school to his ambitions, or has been spoiled by too free use of other people's money and by habits of dissipation.

4. The instinct of self-assertion and the assumption of individual responsibility. This instinct is a vital part of finest manhood, a sort of divine impulse to realize himself as a free personality and to assume his own responsibilities with reference to the personal world.

5. Involved in this impulse of self-assertion is the critical instinct which expresses his conscious right and determination to do his own thinking, which challenges traditions, customs and authorities in the world of ideas, demanding for their justification new and better evidences, and re-examining the ground of faith in old teachings.

6. There comes also out of the impulse to self-assertion a practical resistance to authority in matters of conduct, except as that authority justifies itself to his own reason and conscience, resulting often in seriously strained or broken relations between the

boy and those whose right to rule over him he has hitherto acknowledged.

It would be possible to indicate with more detail the elements of adolescent psychology which complicate the boy's life and put, for him, a new meaning into his relations with the world and bring perplexity and stress into his experience. But this outline will be sufficient to show in a general way the sort of being we have to deal with in the adolescent boy, and to indicate his perils and needs in the matter of environment.

School Life.

As might be expected in a system which provides for about twelve years of grade and high-school work, beginning at the age of six, much stress and trouble commonly arise during the last six years, and especially during the last four years. The reasons are very apparent. While his rapid bone-growth and body changes make him awkward physically and his soul-changes make him perplexed and awkward mentally, his social and sexual feeling make him painfully sensitive and distressingly embarrassed over "bad breaks," slow comprehension and low marks, and he longs, in his discouragement and embarrassment, for escape from public appearances in school society, where he thinks he appears to disadvantage, where some irritating personal con-

tacts are inevitable, and where he feels that he is subjected to unjust reproaches and insinuations and more or less of silent contempt. Furthermore, it seems to him that he is wasting time and effort on studies that have no direct relation to his future welfare. He does not see why he should study Latin, a language that ceased to be spoken ages ago, and that no man even fresh from Italy can now use; or why he should study German or French when all the foreigners coming to this country are learning English as fast as they can; or Algebra, which does not seem vitally related to any business in which he is ever likely to be engaged; or other studies as far removed as these from any work he is ever likely to have to do. So the boy feels; and being what he is, he can not feel or reason otherwise, unless he has been encouraged to aim at a professional career through college training. But the average boy is without ambition or natural qualifications for professional life, and has too much sense to believe that these studies are wisely adapted to fit him for manual labor or commercial business. His objections are not met by telling him that there is mental discipline in these studies, for he knows there would be not only mental discipline, but also real interest and advantage to himself in studies adapted to fit him for the career that seems most natural and inevitable for him. The average boy can not be

shown that the school program put before him is a practical, sensible program. Earlier in his life he would accept other people's opinions as to what was best for him; but he will not do this now. He is far enough along on the way to manhood to demand reasons that satisfy himself, and the simple fact is that in the case of the average boy such reasons can not be given; and if he yields the point and pursues these studies it is against his own practical judgment, and he is ill at ease. The vocational instinct is urging him to get into some sort of business rather than pursue impractical studies in school. Furthermore, he has passed the time of life when he can easily yield, against his own judgment to authority, where matters that seem to him vital are at stake. He has gone far enough on the way to manhood to feel his own rights and assume his own responsibility as to what he shall do, and the stress of the situation often prompts him to abandon school with or without the consent of his parents.

In order that the boy may be saved from the too early discontinuance of school life and the resultant idleness so often demoralizing, two things are necessary. First, the boy himself must be treated more intelligently and sympathetically by parents and teachers who understand him better and can help him to a better understanding of himself. His

friends need to know the new elements entering into adolescent consciousness, and the perplexity and stress resulting therefrom, that they may diminish his embarrassment and save him from his discouragement. It is necessary, secondly, to adapt the educational system more perfectly to the needs and nature of the boy.

My own opinion is that the educational program mapped out for the average boy by educators and adopted by school boards is not a wise one, and that the boy's objections to it are for the most part valid. The boy is largely right and his teachers wrong. Our educational system does not fit the average boy, for whom it is made, or ought to be made, and he can not be put through our educational mill without distressing him and largely wasting his time and energy. Our system fits fairly well the boy who aims through college training for a professional career. For his sake the grade and high-school courses articulating with college curricula built on classical and largely mediæval models may be all right, though even that is open to question; but for the average boy who must and ought to be a laborer or business man the system is largely absurd, and the boy has sense enough to know it. His objections are, in the main, sound, notwithstanding the arguments of his teachers who plan the courses of study and the school boards who adopt them and the par-

ents who try, though with much misgiving, to defend them. The thing to be done is to make our educational system fit the average and normal boy, rather than the exceptional one, by a better provision for vocational instruction and discipline, and by making elective the studies intimately related to professional training and life. When we have courses of study and methods of education that really fit the nature and needs of the average adolescent, we shall find him more willing to continue in school as long as he ought to do so, and more ready for business when he leaves school. Thousands of our youth may thus be saved from the demoralizing idleness due to the premature discontinuance of school life.

Work for Boys.

Attention has already been called to the fact that along with the social and sexual instincts which have reference to one's future social and domestic life, adolescence brings a quickened interest in one's relation to industrial society, and furnishes an impulse in the soul of every unspoiled boy to enter a gainful occupation or to make preparation for such. We have also noted the demoralizing results of idleness. It is therefore evident that the adolescent out of school and during the long vacations should be furnished employment. He needs the work to satisfy

the higher nature and save his self-respect, and he often needs it to furnish money to satisfy the needs of school and social life. He needs it to divert his attention from certain new elements of consciousness which expose him to morbidity and temptation. He needs it as an outlet for his abundant energies and as a means of keeping him out of bad company, and to keep him from frequent and close contact with the evil element of his environment.

Unfortunately it is sometimes very difficult for a boy to find work. It is often impossible for men of ability and experience to get work, and it can not be expected that a boy will seek work with the eagerness and constancy of men who are driven to this quest by the needs of a family. A few disappointments and rebuffs will drive most boys to despair. Moreover, boys can hardly be expected to cling to a job which is difficult and uncongenial when the treatment received from the employer is discourteous and rude. Hence it often happens that between the difficulty of finding a position and the difficulty of holding it when obtained, the boy is much of the time out of work and discouraged. He needs much help, therefore, in this matter, and his parents and wise friends should give as much attention to it as may be necessary. It is very important that work be found for him to do. It is better that a father whose business abilities are large and whose time is

valuable should even give several days now and then to the task of finding work for his boy than that the latter should be left in morally dangerous idleness. Wherever possible, the father should find or make a place for his boy in his own business establishment, unless something quite satisfactory can be found elsewhere. But many men in professional life can not possibly use their boys in their own business. It would be possible in many instances to give a boy plenty of employment in and about his own home, if the father would add to his parental authority the discretion and intelligent oversight of the boy's work that the average employer of labor gives to the average employee, indicating definitely the work to be done, and requiring that it should be done and well done, and even paying for it such a price as might be agreed upon as reasonable. A man might often as well hire his own boy at a stipulated wage as to make a weekly or monthly allowance. It may be more difficult for a man to get his work done by hiring his own boy than by hiring some one else, but the boy needs the work for more reasons than one, and the trouble and expense of saving a boy by keeping him properly employed are much less than the trouble and expense occasioned by a lost boy. A school superintendent in an Iowa town secured a piece of land and divided it up into garden patches for a number of boys, and superin-

tended their work during the summer, and at the end of the season each boy had a nice lot of money in the bank. He worked with the boys, advising and directing them, giving them the benefit of his garden experience and of his company, and was also intelligently interested in their summer sports. Any community could well afford to properly remunerate some one for giving this sort of attention to its boys during the long vacation, and if such a superintendent of boys at work had the intelligent backing of the boys' parents, the results would be highly satisfactory. A few fathers anywhere who have boys needing work in summer time could associate themselves and their boys in some gardening enterprise and thus solve the problem of giving the boys work. An intelligent director of boy-work, the superintendent and the boys also being properly remunerated, could improve the appearance of the average town by at least fifty per cent by cutting grass and weeds, clearing rubbish away, and planting and tending ornamental shrubs and cultivating patches that would otherwise be given over to weeds. Just as soon as the importance of proper employment for boys is fully recognized it will be easily possible for groups of fathers, or for the city fathers of the town council, to arrange for the employment of its boys at wages which will be an inducement to them and will solve the problem of keeping the boys gen-

erally out of touch with the vicious element of their environment.

The Boy and His Home.

When we have fitted our educational system to the boy's needs and nature, and have afforded him proper employment, we shall have gone far toward the solution of the boy problem. But in the case of all boys there is a social instinct which seeks satisfaction and ordinarily finds it when the day's work in school or elsewhere is ended. The boy's demoralization is generally accomplished through his social contacts and it is, therefore, important that his social life should be wisely superintended. The social nature and needs of the boy require the sympathetic attention of his friends in the home, the Church, the public school, and society generally.

It is obvious that chief responsibility rests upon the parents, and the home should be, as far as possible, the field of the boy's social life. His parents will observe his inclination to be particularly chummy with one or more of his boy friends. These friends should be welcomed at the boy's home, as a rule, even though not very desirable guests, because it is better he should be permitted to have their company in his own home than to have to meet them in more questionable places. The boy's own relatives should realize that it is better for him

that they should welcome his friends and seek to improve them than to snub them, and lose, with them, the company of their own boy. It is a good thing if a boy can have a comfortable and attractive room of his own, to which he can retreat when he wishes to be alone, and to which he can take his friends. It may be difficult to keep a boy's room in order, and such an accommodation might not seem practicable from the housekeeper's point of view, but it will help to save the boy.

In this matter of saving boys it should be remembered that a narrow policy is more likely to fail than a broad and liberal one. In other words, the best way to save the boy in which you are particularly interested is to plan for the salvation of several boys. Parents who have the boy to safeguard should enter into an arrangement with other parents for protecting all their boys by throwing open their homes, furnishing entertainment, games, and refreshments. In this connection it may be well to emphasize the importance to the boy of having the companionship of his own relatives, especially his father. The generally recognized advantage of the farm as a place for raising boys is largely due to the fact that on the farm there is always employment for a boy, and he has his own father for his almost constant associate. The father's habits, opinions, and ideals of life are likely to be adopted by

the son. This same relation obtains, even in town and city life, between mother and daughter in the average home. This tends to save the town girl from the evils which demoralize the town boy. What if hired help in the home left no work for a girl to do, and our social conventions gave her the liberty of the town and street as they open them to the boy, so that she could grow up in idleness, having the freedom of the town, and being most of the time away from her mother,—would not her safety be greatly imperiled? But such is the situation very commonly with respect to the boy and his father. All over this land, as a condition of moral well-being for the boys, there is need of more companionship between father and son. Multitudes of boys are going to destruction because they have no chance to get well acquainted with their own fathers, whose companionship they need during the adolescent period more than at any other time of life. Many a father would do well to consider whether he can afford to spend so much of his time away from home, especially during the evenings, when he might be getting acquainted with his boys, and when they are in greatest moral danger. Whatever may be said for fraternities, clubs, and lodges, it is certain that many fathers are giving to these time which might better be given to their boys.

The Boy and the Church.

The Church may greatly assist in the work of safeguarding the social contacts of the boy. She should offer him something besides preaching, prayer-meetings, and chances for Bible study. These do not appeal to the average boy. They are not "drawing-cards" at all. A boy properly reared has naturally much respect for the Church and a sense of obligation to it, but these are not strong enough to hold him, unless the Church offers him something he really wants. If she really ministers to his social wants, he will be likely to appreciate this ministry and respond to her appeal to attend her various means of grace. The Church should aim to make herself a social institution for the sake of her young people. She should, if possible, make herself a center of social life. A church shut from Sabbath to Sabbath, save as it opens for midweek prayer service and official meetings, is very seriously defaulting in the matter of social ministry to its young people. It should have social parlors, with books and periodicals, open under the care of wise committees some evening or evenings each week. Quiet and innocent amusement, literary and musical entertainment, should here be afforded to the young of both sexes, the entertainments being programmed and managed by the best adult talent in the Church. In small

commmunities where such a task would be too large for a single Church, the Churches should jointly erect a Young Men's Christian Association building and support an association. In large cities such association work should be supplemented by social functions in the parlors of the church and in the homes of her people.

The Churches are not yet alive to their obligation to minister socially to young people of both sexes, and especially to boys. Many a Church could easily double its effectiveness as a boy-saver if it would put in a gymnasium and manage it properly. But the average board will balk at such a proposition, pleading the great expense of it, and insisting that while a gymnasium is all right, the church is no place for it. These same godly men will think it all right to put in kitchen and dining-room and every facility for feasting, oyster suppers and things of that sort, but refuse to boys something more urgently needed by their adolescent instincts in the way of athletic entertainment. We need to learn that it is just as religious for a boy to turn somersaults in a church gymnasium as for his father to eat oysters in a church dining-room, and often more important, inasmuch as a gymnasium would help to save the boy from idleness and evil associations. It is now generally recognized by those who are trying to save both young and old people in the city

slums that Christian effort must bring a real ministry on social and entertainment lines to the people. While this need is especially urgent in the case of poor people in the city slums, it is a real though less urgent need in all Church work. Whether boys belong to Church or not, to rich or poor families, whether they are in the slum or out of it, they need a social ministry which the Church can render, and this ministry will greatly assist in safeguarding the boys and will make them more responsive to her appeals.

Aside from that social ministry to boys which has been suggested for the home and Church, many things may be done for them by individuals and organizations recognizing the importance of it. Literary, debating, and oratorical clubs and semi-military organizations may be formed, or societies may be framed on civic models for study and debate, as for instance, when boys are organized on the model of the city council for study and discussion concerning local government and interests, or on the model of the State or Federal Government. Anything may be welcomed which will profitably employ the boys when they are not at home or at work or in school.

It is scarcely possible to overstate the importance of a proper superintendence of the boy's social life by the home, the Church, and society generally.

Next to right education in home and Church, and proper employment in school and business, it is the one thing needed to save him from frequent and injurious contact with the evil element in his surroundings.

The Boy and the Public.

In this connection it ought to be said that society, in the larger aspects of its organization, spirit and life, is responsible along with the home and the Church, for the safety of the boy. As a matter of fact, what the Christian home and Church are trying to do is to save the boy from the demoralizing influences and agencies created and tolerated by society. Communities, in their political and organized capacity, must take a hand in this business of protecting boys. The one burning and terrible indictment that may be brought against society at large is that it fails to enact and enforce laws which would shield the boy from his greatest dangers. Such laws as do exist against gambling, against the sale of cigarettes and tobacco to boys, should be enforced, and in many communities much stricter laws should be enacted and enforced. The social evil is practically omnipresent. To no class of our people does it make such a demoralizing appeal as to our young men and boys. No adolescent boy of average intelligence and feeling, in the average community,

can be unaware of its presence and solicitations. With sexual feeling warm in his blood, and unprotected from the assaults of temptation by the larger intelligence, mature judgment, and ripened moral and religious sensibilities of finished manhood, the boy yields again and again, being lured to ruin as the ox is baited by an ear of corn to the place of slaughter. Severely as the home and Church may be arraigned for the neglect and ruin of the boy, the immediate, direct and responsible agents of his ruin are the publicly tolerated social iniquities and legally licensed vices of society. The community, through its organized life, its customs, its indifference to institutionalized and open vice in its midst, provides and countenances the evils which touch the boy so disastrously. It is only a half truth to say that the homes and Churches can and ought to save the boys. In many instances they do, but in multitudes of cases they do not and can not. But why should society deliberately counteract the work of good homes and Churches by setting snares for unwary feet through institutionalized and legally protected vice, or through official indifference or police connivance with law-breakers? It is high time that society should be arraigned for its wicked complicity in the destruction of young manhood, that lovers of the boy should be made to feel their responsibility for the vicious environment which society provides

for him, and should supplement the work of the Christian home and Church by rooting out the institutionalized vices which prey upon the youth of the land.

A well-known feature of the work of the Woman's Christian Temperance Union is the mothers' meeting. In every community there ought to be held often a fathers' meeting, in which there should be a bringing together of information as to what is going on in the boy-world, and a serious, heart-to-heart conference as to what should be done to safeguard the youth of the community. This matter is vastly more important than most of the matters which call men together for counsel. All sorts of civic improvements, the advertising of the municipality, the getting of new business, such things as commercial clubs and trade associations meet to confer about, are insignificant as compared with the conservation of the morals of the boys growing up in a community. There could be no better proof of the good sense, moral character and public spirit of the leading men in a town or city than a frequent conference by them about the moral and social environment affecting the lives of the big boys and young men in their midst. And if in this way the sober manhood of the commmunity could be compelled to give attention to this important matter, great good would certainly result.

The Boy and the Social Evil.

No danger threatening the adolescent in the average community is more immanent and deadly than the social evil. The magnitude of the peril is partly due to its damning effect on the youth perverted by it, and partly to his extreme susceptibility to resistless temptation on account of the novelty and power of the passion awakening within him. His truest friends are largely unconscious of the impulse becoming ever more insistent in his life, and he will not acknowledge to any but an intimate and vulgar companion the haunting and fascinating power of this mystery which tantalizes and lures him. The large factor which this home-making instinct has proved to be in the bliss and tragedy of human life, and the adult multitudes of every generation swept on to destruction by lawless passion, show how tremendous is the assault of temptation, and how strong the barriers of knowledge, of judgment, of moral and religious sensibility need to be to save the youth from falling when temptation is fairly offered and abetted by opportunity. Let no father or mother deem the boy safe because he never revealed to them a dirty mind and seems far removed from grossness and bestiality by his physical constitution. This passion speaks to the delicately organized, often even to the neurotic lad, as strongly as

it speaks to any. Such a lad is more likely to be nobly preoccupied, and therefore shielded from temptation, but if he be not preoccupied or forewarned, and shielded from inward brooding and outward appeal, his intellectuality, his imagination, and his delicate sensibilities even accentuate his danger. The revelations now and then made concerning conditions existing even in our grade and high schools show how near and real the boy's danger is.

It is scarcely possible to overestimate the importance of preoccupying the adolescent with school and work and good society. Let this reference emphasize the importance of what has already been said in respect to these. The friends of the young man should also see to it that he has the information due him at this period concerning himself and his right relation to others. His father should be in such confidential relations with him that he can give him all the information essential to his protection and right development. The right kind of literature should be put into his hands, and arrangements should be made by friends of the young men for some doctor who has the interest of the boys at heart to give them plain talks on this matter so vital to their well-being.

At this period, when the moral sensibilities are ripening, it is possible to impress young men, as never before, with a sense of their obligation to

others, and the sexual impulse, under right direction, will give to a young man not already spoiled a sort of reverence for and chivalric devotion to womanhood, so that he will feel the essential meanness toward womankind of lawless passion, and will be moved not alone by considerations of his own welfare, but by sympathy and conscience, to take a firm stand against the social evil. He should be led to resolve that he will offer to his future bride a personality as unstained and pure as he hopes and presumes her own to be.

A Boy's Religious Doubts.

It is time now to give attention to the religious phase of adolescent life, and it may be well, first of all, to face the fact that the properly developing boy grows critical somewhere in his teens, and his criticism is very likely to affect his attitude toward the religious teaching he has received. This, as I have already explained, does not mean a new attitude of mind toward truth, but a real doubt concerning the truth of what he has been taught. The boy's enlarging vision and maturing judgment disclose to him the erroneousness of many things which he formerly believed and the fallibility of people he once thought too wise to err in important matters. His hunger for knowledge moves him to re-examine his own faith and the grounds of it. When he finds

himself confronted with the authority of age, custom, and tradition, he wants to know what reasons there originally were for believing the things that have been handed down from ancient times, and how those who have spoken with authority derived their right to speak thus. Many devout men have escaped serious religious questioning as they passed through the years of adolescence, but very many have maintained their childhood's faith only after the most distressing doubts and fears and imploring search for reasons to support their religious beliefs. But the host of men reared in religious homes and trained in Sunday schools, who abandon religion between twelve and twenty years of age, is proof of the sad havoc which the critical spirit brings into the period of adolescence. Some will say, of course, that it is youthful perversity and sin which break the religious tie and lead to unbelief, and truly sin has often very much to do with it, but in thousands of cases in which character seems to have suffered no deterioration and conduct remains exemplary, there is a real unbelief that stands in the way of religious profession and Church membership. And even where deterioration of character is evident and unbelief in Christianity is largely the result of sin, the fact seems to be that criticism and skepticism are normal elements of soul life in youth, and they come into one's experience at the time of youth's mental

and moral stress due to profound physiological and psychological changes which mark transition from boyhood to manhood, and this skepticism helps to break the tie that binds the boy to the religious life.

Weary at the end of a Sabbath day's work, a pastor sat with his family and listened to his wife as she read from the Church paper. She had just finished reading a rather severe article against Mormonism, when the fifteen-year-old boy broke in with: "What right have we to talk that way about the Mormons? Are n't they just as honest as we are? Do n't they think they are right just as much as we do? They have got a book called the Book of Mormon, and that 's their Bible. Yes, and the Mohammedans have a Bible of their own, and other religions have Bibles of their own; and how do we know but some of theirs are right and ours wrong?" The boy looked almost frightened at the doubt he had ventured to utter, and his mother looked at him in blank astonishment. But his father had once been where the boy then was, and perfectly appreciated his state of mind. He treated the boy's anxiety with great sympathy, and slowly, carefully and thoroughly argued the matter out with him. No professor in a theological school ever went more carefully into the evidences of Christianity, especially into the question of the authenticity and reliability of the New Testament Scriptures, than the

boy's father did that night. The boy's religious doubts and fears came out in a long conversation which lasted until midnight, and the father had the satisfaction of knowing that his boy went to bed immensely relieved and quite fully satisfied by the arguments to which he had listened. The next morning, in the father's study, the boy almost tearfully expressed his gratitude for the light that had been thrown on the problem that had been troubling him, and then said: "I wish you would give that talk to the boys in our Sunday school class. I know they would be glad and that it would help them." "Why," said the father, "are the other boys having trouble too?" "O," he said, "I do n't know as they are having much trouble about it, but I know they are having their doubts, just as I had, and need help. And I do n't know where they can get help. Of course, Kenneth's father is an educated man, and he can help Kenneth; but who can help Walter? His father is not educated, and what is more, he is not a Christian, and would not care if Walter did give up his Christian faith." There are the best of reasons for believing that thousands of good boys come into just such a state of mind as this case reveals, and that for every one who goes to some competent religious adviser and gets help, many yield up their faith without any very great stress of experience after finding that their doubts, if expressed,

are regarded by others as tokens of perversity and seldom answered satisfactorily.

It should be remembered, too, by those who are trying to care religiously for the boys and young men, that there is a great deal of literature which a wide-awake boy is very likely to find in public libraries and book stores, or have given to him by his friends, which will tend to help him on to positive and final unbelief. "Been buying some books?" said a Christian father to his boy, as the latter came in with a couple of books under his arm. "Yes," said the boy. "I have had the first volume of Emerson quite awhile, and have read it through, and have been wanting the second volume, so I thought I would get it." "What is the other book?" "Ingersoll's lectures." "How came you to buy that?" "O, I 've been seeing a good deal in the papers and magazines lately about Ingersoll and his lectures, and I thought I would like to have them." "Did somebody advise you to buy them?" "No." "Well," said the father, "I would not have advised you to buy that book. Ingersoll has helped to destroy the religious faith of a good many people. I should feel very badly if I thought you were trying to find reasons for disbelieving Christianity; but if you are fully purposing to lead a Christian life, and sincere in your desire to know the truth and do the right, I guess you will get no harm from the book. He is

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a beautiful writer, but makes some very bad arguments." Then the father asked the boy to read aloud from Ingersoll, and interrupted the reading occasionally by commenting on the fallacy of the arguments offered. A few weeks later the father found the copy of Ingersoll on the floor in the garret, the boy having gotten through with it, though he still treasured his Emerson. The boy seemed to have taken no harm in a religious way from the reading of the book.

A Christian boy of fifteen or sixteen years came home from the library one day with Paine's "Age of Reason." The father said, "Who recommended you to get that book?" "Nobody," said the boy. "Then, how came you to get it?" "Well," said the boy, "we were reciting in history, and our teacher said that the writings of Thomas Paine did a great deal to prepare the American people for the Declaration of Independence and the War of the Revolution; and then one of the scholars said that he thought Paine had done as much harm by his infidel writings as he had done good by his patriotic writings, and I thought I would like to read some of his books. And when I looked over the card catalogue I came to his theological writings, and one of them was 'The Age of Reason.' And I thought that would probably be the best one; so I got that." "Well," replied the father, "I read the 'Age of

Reason' when I was a student in the university. I had a room-mate who was an infidel, and we used to argue about religion every day, and when I found that he had this book in his room, and was getting his arguments out of it, I got the book myself and read it, and then I had a better chance to know what was coming when I argued with him. I also bought 'Bishop Watson's Reply to Paine,' which was a great help to me in my argument. I would not have selected this book for you to read, but if you watch carefully for the mistakes in his logic, and are not looking for excuses to disbelieve the Bible, I guess you will get along all right. Suppose we look into it now." Then the boy read aloud, while his father listened and commented once in a while on the argument. The book went back to the library in a few days, and the boy seemed to have suffered no loss of interest in the religious life.

These instances help us to understand what aids to unbelief are afforded to the boy at a time of life when he is prompted by a deep instinct to re-examine the ground of his faith. It is easy to see what disastrous results will follow, if at this time of life a boy gets in with bad companions and enters into dissipations, and really seeks for excuses to break with the Church and part company with religion. The same spirit which makes him critical in his attitude toward the Bible then makes him critical of

Church members. He becomes keenly aware of their shortcomings, especially if they are prominent in official and business life and conspicuously fail to exemplify their Christianity in conduct. Even in his own home, if the situation becomes somewhat strained on account of disagreements concerning matters in which he is interested, he will be quick to see the elements of insincerity and inconsistency in father and mother. The unethical features of the life of people professing Christianity powerfully prejudice the boy against the Church in its effort to help him religiously.

It is evident that the adolescent boy is very specially in need of help to save his religious faith and moral character, and a tremendous effort should be made to fit the whole environment of home, Church, and society to his needs. While it is evident that most of the peril which threatens him is of a practical sort, growing out of his associations and activities, there is a real difficulty, due to his expanding intellectual life, in maintaining his religious faith, and it is doubtless worth while to consider what can be done for him in this matter. It is my opinion that the Church has need of a short treatise simply but powerfully written, putting cogently the argument for Christianity, and putting it on a plane of thinking level with the comprehension of the average young man. It is quite absurd

to be without a simple, powerful apologetic in the presence of so much unbelief, when boys and young men are falling away from the faith by thousands. In the absence of such a book, pastors and bright laymen should be ready to give such good reasons for the faith that is in them as to answer the questions of the average doubter who is sincere. Those who are deeply interested in big boys and young men can easily ascertain, if they are inclined to treat honest doubt with the respect due to it, who the young people are who need a book or lecture, or series of lectures, on lines of Christian apologetics. Scores could be saved to vital faith by sympathetic and intelligent treatment at the opportune time.

A boy often regrets during the period of adolescence that he was ever made a member of the Church, and quite strenuously objects to church attendance. Opposition to church attendance usually means that the services are to him uninteresting, or that something has come into the boy's life that makes church-going a real trial to him. It is doubtful whether he should be compelled to go against very serious disinclination, especially as the time will soon come when compulsion will be no longer possible. If his wishes in the matter are respected, he may be willing after a while to resume church-going. When a certain boy expressed regret that he had ever joined the Church, his father said:

"The fact of the matter is this: Your mother and I hold the view that children belong to the Kingdom of God, and as a token of your citizenship in that Kingdom we had you baptized when you were an infant. The time came when you so far approved of what had been done that you wished to join the Church upon profession of faith, and we encouraged you to do so. Now you feel that a mistake has been made. Perhaps so; but also perhaps not. Look back a little at your own life. Don't you see how often your views and your feelings about things have changed in the last few years? Sometimes you have been interested in one thing, and then you have lost interest in that and become interested in something else. This does not mean that things have been changing so much, but that you have been changing. You have to change, because you are passing from childhood to manhood. You are no longer a child, and you are not yet a man. You can not be now as you used to be, and you can not continue to be as you are now. You have not reached the end of your growing, and therefore you do not now know how things will look to you after awhile, or how you will feel about them. When you reach maturity you will be able to settle down and have some definite and lasting views on the subject of religion and on many other things. You will have views then on many subjects quite different

from the views you hold now. In the growth of a man, the finest and best things mature last. Nature begins at the bottom to build a man, and ends at the top. This probably means that you will have keener moral and religious sensibilities after awhile than you have now. It probably means also that you will think better of the Church and of the Christian religion than you do now. Then you may be glad that your father and mother took the view they did, and followed the course they have pursued in the matter of having you baptized and connected with the Church. If you find, when you have become a man, that you do not wish to be a Church member it will be a very easy matter to terminate your membership. But before you take yourself out of the position in which your mother and I have placed you, you had better wait until you can bring a man's feeling and judgment to bear on the subject." The boy appeared to regard this proposition as a sensible one, and seemed content to let that matter rest for several years. In the course of his college life his letters indicated an increasing interest in Christianity and in the Church, and when he was ready to hang out his shingle as a professional man he handed his Church letter to the pastor, and has been ever since an active and useful member of the Church.

The Religious Crisis in Adolescence.

The third six-year period of life which we now have under consideration is normally the period of moral and religious crisis. Observation and experience prove it to be so, and the reasons for it are sufficiently obvious. It would be psychologically impossible for the crisis to come until the various elements of soul-life characteristic of manhood have been brought into personal experience. Until then human life has not reached full complexity, and it is impossible to determine the relativity and proportion of the elements and capacities that mix and function in full-orbed personality. But when adolescence has brought all the elements of adult life into consciousness and experience, there comes on normally a period of stress and strain, of doubt, uncertainty and suspense, the duration and intensity of which depend partly upon heredity and partly upon environment, resulting commonly between the twelfth and twentieth year in an adjustment of the psychological elements and in a determination of personality which are final in all but exceptional natures, or ordinary natures subjected eventually to extraordinary influences. For this period of stress no definite boundaries can be set, but the average lad in the average environment will probably experience some such crisis between

the fourteenth and eighteenth year. Some persons mature more rapidly than others, and the environment may hasten or delay the crisis. It has been observed that the period of puberty in individual life corresponds to the barbaric stage of race life; and as the period between barbarism and civilization in race life is probably brief compared with the unrecorded eons of primeval life, so the period in which, after puberty, the elements of personality tend normally to crystallize into fixity of character is brief in its relation to the whole time of life, either preceding or following the dawn of adolescence.

Whatever moral habits have been formed, whatever religious purposes have been established previously, the adolescent crisis brings an experience and has a significance impossible at any previous stage; and whatever may previously have been done or experienced comes short of that full and final determination of character normally arriving in adolescent years. Through memory and introspection, aided by such writers as Hall, Starbuck, Coe, Forbush, and many others who might be named, we may comprehend fairly well the processes involved in this important and so commonly final crisis. Only a brief delineation will be attempted here.

We have noted, as the main content of the social consciousness arising in adolescence, a recognition

of self in relation to the social organism. Society is not an unclassified, unorganized herd of individuals, but an organization of individual units embracing countless smaller organizations. This fact the adolescent recognizes, however vaguely, and becomes interested in knowing or finding his own place or destiny in this complex organism. His interest in himself as related to the social organism, and in the social organism as related to himself, is complicated and heightened by his sexual instinct. He recognizes also that his destiny as an individual unit in the social organism depends partly upon the life-work he is to do, the contribution he is to make to the social organism. He recognizes that he has the problem of his individual destiny in the social world to work out. As one person, he has to determine his relation to other persons. He is working on the problem of his personal relations to the personal universe. He probably does not fully realize his position and clearly define his task in this way, but this is really just where he is and what he is doing, not as a philosopher dealing with abstractions, but as an individual trying to get into a comfortable relation to certain concrete realities. He has also come to feel quite keenly his individual rights and responsibilities, and knows that he is taking into his own hands that destiny for which others can no longer be responsible. Now, while the elemental

instincts and ambitions of manhood are so mightily moving him to find or make a place for himself in the personal world and to determine his attitude toward that world, his moral and religious sensibilities, which are the finest things in personality and the last things to mature in normal development, are speaking to him more and more urgently, unless natural development has been arrested. And so, while personal ambition and love of self and pleasure lure him to certain courses of action, to self-seeking in various ways, sympathy and conscience plead with him to be good and do good, and to live for others.

The young man often resolves to win the good he desires for himself through service to others, thus paying for what he wants as a man gives money for merchandise. The resolution to purchase heaven by accepting the atonement, by professing faith in Christ, by joining the Church and observing religious ordinances, does not make him a Christian. This does not put his life on the plane of love, does not make him Christian, even though he pays the toil of earth for the bliss of heaven. He comes into right relations with the personal world only when love becomes the mainspring of conduct, when, like Christ, he lives "not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life" for others. If in the crisis of adolescence the lower nature pre-

vails over the higher, producing a selfish attitude toward the personal world and projecting his life on the plane of self-seeking, he becomes an unethical, unmoral personality. If, on the other hand, the higher nature prevails over the lower, producing an altruistic attitude toward the personal world and projecting his life on the plane of service to others, he becomes an ethical and moral personality. If the personal world to which he adjusts himself with a self-consecrating love includes humanity only, he is moral without being religious; if it includes God as the supreme personality, so that, as the prophet says, he "does justly, loves mercy, and walks humbly with God," then he is both moral and religious.

It is unspeakably important that the young man be helped in the crisis of adolescence to a thoroughgoing and complete surrender of himself to the impulses of his higher nature, to the law of love, to the Christian life. All the previous influences of home, Church and society should have been such as to help him to a safe passing of this crisis. Good environment becomes increasingly important as the boy approaches the crisis of adolescence. This is just the time at which contact with the evil element in his environment is likely to be most disastrous. It is the time at which all the resources of the young man's friends should be exhausted in the effort to commit him unreservedly to the Christian life. If

there is ever a time when it may be said that a human destiny is at stake, and hell opens its mouth to receive a soul, it is in this crisis of the adolescent period. The Church is only beginning to appreciate the importance of the utmost endeavors to help the young man to a right decision at this time. Let the gravity of this crisis emphasize what has already been said about the importance of the home, social and Church influences which should now be brought to bear upon the young man. If this crisis issues in Christian character, nothing but the stress of extraordinary temptation will ever turn him aside from the Christian life; but if it issues in ungodliness and immorality, nothing but an extraordinary pressure of good influences will ever turn him to righteousness.

Those who are trying to save the boy should not despair, even when he seems to have abandoned himself completely to evil. Men habituated to dissipation for a whole lifetime are sometimes rescued, and there is more hope of a boy who is sowing his wild oats in the transition from boyhood to manhood. Attention has been repeatedly called in this writing to that biological law of recapitulation which tends to make the individual in his development pass through the stages through which the race has gone. The wild oats-sowing of a boy in his teens is generally due to the power of an evil environment over

him when he is psychologically at his nearest approach to the barbarian. In thousands of cases the power of evil over him is broken by the maturity and the completion of his own development. A large percentage of the now decent men in society had a period of wild oats-sowing and finally gave up their dissipations even without having been subjected to any especially powerful religious influences. Those supreme soul qualities which are the finest and best fruits of race progress and Christian civilization are the last to mature in individual growth, and nature will often complete the processes of development and mature these finer and higher powers in spite of youthful dissipations. It is clear, therefore, that those who are seeking to save the boy from his youthful vices may look for reinforcements in the maturing faculties of the boy himself. As the Duke of Wellington at the Battle of Waterloo fought desperately, knowing that the crisis would soon be passed, and all the time hoping and praying for the arrival of Blucher, who finally came, so the friends of the boy should keep up the fight for his reformation and salvation, hoping and praying for reinforcements and victory through the influence of those finer and higher sensibilities normally maturing at the end of the adolescent period.

Than this task of saving the boys, neither home nor Church nor State has any work more important.

Solve the boy-problem and you solve practically every problem with which we have to deal. Save the boys and you make easy the task of saving the girls. Save the boys and girls and you save the home, you save the Church, you save the State, you save the republic, you save civilization—you save everything.

And the boy can be saved. God puts him into our keeping and gives us power to shape his destiny aright. Only a small percentage of our criminals were projected into a criminal career by bad heredity. It is the testimony of experts that most of the adolescents who have gone seriously wrong have done so because parents or guardians failed to deal wisely with them. The great majority of boys in reform schools and the young men in prisons are normally constituted, and their moral ruin must be charged up to bad environment. Better influences in the home and wiser work in the Churches would have saved most of these boys in spite of the unethical and barbarous phases of our social life; in spite of the licensed evils and the unlicensed abominations tolerated in town and city through public indifference, official negligence, or even purchased and criminal consent to lawlessness. As friends of the boys, whether in home or Church, we must do our utmost to destroy the death-traps which our social vices are constantly setting for the incautious feet of youth.

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